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DIFFERENTIAL PATHWAYS OF SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION: SETTling FOR LESS, BUT LEARNING TO LIKE IT

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A thesis submitted to the Wits School of Education, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to ascertain the extent to which low-socio-economic status (SES) South African students have been able to progress through higher education (HE) with the same facility and have succeeded in completing qualifications at the same rate as high-SES students. The backdrop to the study is the high level of inequality in South Africa. A Gini coefficient of 0.65 translates, in the education sector, into high enrolment rates in comparison with other developing countries but very low achievement, with South Africa frequently appearing at the bottom of tables comparing international performance on mathematics, science, and literacy tests. The theoretical framework underpinning the study is derived from the theories of philosophers Alasdair MacIntyre and Wally Morrow. MacIntyre's distinction between the external and internal goods of a practice is deployed to distinguish students who learn to appropriate for themselves the intrinsic value of participating in a practice from students who are driven by external reward. This notion is used to distinguish students who, in Morrow's conception, achieve formal access to a HE institution from those who achieve epistemological access to a programme of study. The data for the study come from a baseline survey and two tracer surveys of student pathways from school into and through HE conducted by the author at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) between 2005 and 2008. While the HSRC study focussed on student aspirations for HE and on student destinations one year later, this study extends the scope to include progression through HE between 2006 and 2010, cross-referencing the HSRC data with Higher Education Management Information System student records. These data are supplemented by case studies of the trajectories of ten students interviewed in late 2008. The key findings of the study are that high-socio-economic status (SES) students tend to enrol in degree programmes in the natural, mathematical, engineering and health sciences, low-SES students in diploma programmes in business / commerce and the human and social sciences. Low-SES students are more likely to drop out of HE after the first and after the second year of study, more likely to pursue a pathway that does not issue in completion, and are also more likely to delay entry into HE. But while high-SES students are more influenced in choosing a programme of study by intrinsic interest in a programme rather than by the prospect of employment, they are also more influenced by the money and status their chosen profession will confer – suggesting that SES differences are more nuanced. The key distinction between low- and high-SES students, the study concludes, is that high-SES students achieve epistemological access with greater facility, completing programmes at higher rates and in a shorter timeframe. SES therefore remains a strong determinant of academic success. And while the HE sector and the National Qualifications Framework might aspire to reduce inequalities in access, mobility and throughput, indications are that these inequalities are still being reproduced. As the case studies reveal, however, though the programme low-SES students complete is often not the programme in which they first enrolled, it is a programme they have learned to like.

KEYWORDS

Higher education; pathways; socio-economic status; success; redress; epistemological access

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Michael Charles Cosser

11th day of November in the year 2015

For all the students who made this research possible –
especially those who defied the odds

PUBLICATIONS EMANATING FROM THIS RESEARCH

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
BCom	Bachelor of Commerce
BEd	Bachelor of Education
BTech	Bachelor of Technology
CA	Chartered Accountant
CHAID	chi-squared automatic interaction detection
CHE	Council on Higher Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FET	Further Education and Training
FETC	Further Education and Training Certificate
GER	gross enrolment ratio
GET	General Education and Training
HE	higher education
HEMIS	Higher Education Management Information System
HET	Higher Education and Training
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus infection
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IT	Information Technology
LLB	Bachelor of Laws
LSAY	Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth
MBChB	Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery
ND	National Diploma
NDP	National Development Plan
NEA	not economically active
NEPI	National Education Policy Initiative
NHC	National Higher Certificate
NI	not indicated
NPC	National Planning Commission
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NSFAS	National Students Financial Aid Scheme
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
SAICA	South African Institute of Chartered Accountants
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SCE	Senior Certificate Examination
SD	standard deviation
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SES	socio-economic status
SET	Science, Engineering and Technology
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
UNISA	University of South Africa
UGB	Undergraduate General 1 st Bachelor's Degree
UK	United Kingdom
UPB	Undergraduate Professional 1 st Bachelor's Degree
US	United States (of America)
VET	vocational education and training

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to ascertain the extent to which South African students from low socio-economic backgrounds have been able to progress through HE with the same facility and have succeeded in completing qualifications at the same rate as students from high socio-economic backgrounds. It does so by analysing the data generated by a panel study, and within it individual case studies, conducted by the author at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), South Africa between 2005 and 2008.

The chapter begins with an outline of the problem statement – the context of national and educational inequality within which the study is located and the import of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in addressing this inequality. Such contextualisation provides the backdrop for an explanation of the rationale for, the research questions underpinning, and the aims of the study. An outline of the chapters through which the thesis of the study is advanced concludes the chapter.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Inequality and education in South Africa

South Africa, with a Gini coefficient of 65.0 (The World Bank, 2015), is the most unequal country in the world.¹ Inequality is seen most pervasively in the education system of the country, which despite the creation of a single education department comprising the many disparate education systems that existed in the apartheid period (1948-1993), effectively operates as a dualistic system. Spaull (2012), for example, shows through modeling student performance separately for the wealthiest 25% of primary schools on the one hand and the poorest 75% of schools on the other that there are striking differences in the factors influencing student performance, only 5 of the 27 factors being shared between the two models for mathematics and 11 of the 30 factors being shared for reading.²

This dualism extends to inequalities in education more broadly. Branson, Garlick, Lam, & Leibbrandt (2012) show that white men and women have, nearly twenty years into democracy, significantly more years of education than do their African counterparts and that,

¹ Its nearest rival, in 2011, was Namibia, with a coefficient of 61.3 (The World Bank, 2015).

² These differences explain the differential performance of South African students on the Boston College-based TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study), which measures trends in mathematics and science achievement at the fourth and eighth grades, and the PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study), which measures trends in reading comprehension at the fourth grade (TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center, 2015).

while there have been large improvements in the average levels of education of the South African population over the post-apartheid period, the majority of the population has not completed secondary education.

While South Africa may fare well in comparison with other developing countries in terms of education coverage – the gross enrolment ratio (GER) for primary education is anything between 99 and 114, depending on the methodology used to calculate it (Gustafsson, 2012: 8) – and while increasing numbers of children are accessing secondary education, years of schooling do not necessarily translate into greater equality. Branson et al. (2012) argue that relatively high levels of primary and secondary school enrolment should issue in increasingly lower inequality and higher levels of growth. South Africa, however, has very high income inequality, high unemployment and relatively low growth rates. Even when years of education are controlled for, then, white, coloured, and Indian / Asian labour market participants continue to outperform their black African counterparts in terms of employment and earnings.

The reasons for such differentiation go beyond quantity (number of years of schooling), however. South Africa was identified in 2006 as one of the countries beset by achievement rather than attainment challenges in education (The World Bank, 2006). As the 2007 World Development report puts it, “The lesson from the massive education expansion in the 1980s and 1990s is clear – expanding places rapidly can come at the cost of quality, reflected in high enrolment rates but low achievement” (The World Bank, 2006: 11). Case & Yogo (1999) have found that factors such as pupil / teacher ratios and general school resources impact significantly not only on years of completed schooling but on the probability of employment and the returns to education of South African workers.

Socio-economic status and the National Qualifications Framework

No study considering pathway differentiation in the South African education system can afford to ignore the NQF, if only because that Framework makes explicit reference, in two of its five objectives, to “access ... mobility and progression” and to “redress”. The objectives of the NQF, as articulated in the SAQA Act (RSA, 1995), are to:

1. Create an integrated national framework for learning achievements
2. Facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths
3. Enhance the quality of education and training
4. Accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities; and thereby
5. Contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social and economic development of the nation at large (RSA, 1995: Clause 2).

Ten years after the proclamation of these objectives, at least one of them – the first – has been achieved: a single Department of Education was established in 1996 through the

promulgation of the South African Education Act (RSA, 1996), which saw the repeal of key sections of the Coloured Persons Education Act, 1963 (RSA, 1963), the Indians Education Act, 1965 (RSA, 1965), the Education and Training Act, 1979 (RSA, 1979), the Private Schools Act (House of Assembly), 1986 (RSA, 1986), and the Education Affairs Act (House of Assembly), 1988 (RSA, 1988).

But it is the second and fourth objectives of the NQF with which this study engages – whether and how the NQF has “Facilitate[d] access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths” and has “Accelerate[d] the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities”. While some scholars (Young, 2003; Ensor, 2003; Allais, 2003) have questioned whether *any* of the objectives of the NQF has been achieved, the extent to which the facilitation of access, mobility and progression is measured ought arguably, since the primary objective of the NQF has patently been redress (Allais, 2003), to be viewed through a redress lens. This perspective shifts the focus from the NQF as mobiliser of the access, mobility and progression cause to a consideration of whether past inequalities in educational opportunity have been perpetuated in the pathways of students into and through HE.

RATIONALE FOR, AIMS OF, AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS UNDERPINNING THE STUDY

While inequality within the schooling system in South Africa is a known quantity, a nuanced understanding of how a cohort of students fares in the transition from school to HE and in progressing through the HE system – notwithstanding statistics on enrolment and completion rates at the systemic level (Bunting, 2004; CHE, 2013) – is not as well understood.

Data that enable the tracking of student pathways into and through HE over an extended period have been available in the United States (US) at least since the introduction of the Department of Education longitudinal study of students in 1988 (Fox, Connolly & Snyder, 2005; Haveman & Smeeding, 2006; Adelman, 2006; Rowan-Kenyon, 2007; Chen & St. John, 2011; Chingos & McPherson, 2011; Aud, Hussar, Kena, Bianco, Frohlich, Kemp & Tahan, 2011). But it is only in the last ten years, with the increased access to HE of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, that socio-economic differentiation in student progression has begun to receive serious attention. Researchers in a number of countries, notably the US (as manifested in the citations above), the United Kingdom (UK) (Powdthavee & Vignoles, 2008; Crawford, 2014) and Australia (QUT Vice-Chancellor, 2004; Marks, 2007), have increasingly turned their gaze upon persistence and completion rates and, in some instances, upon the factors influencing those rates.

While household panel studies have been conducted in South Africa since 1990,³ there was not a dedicated national focus on education institution-based tracking studies until the implementation of the student pathways project by the HSRC in 2001 (Cosser with Du Toit, 2002; Cosser with Du Toit & Visser, 2004). That study, which tracked the 2001 cohort of Grade 12 students across all nine provinces of the country into their HE destinations in 2002, was followed by a similar study tracking students from Grade 12 in 2005 into and through HE between 2006 and 2008 (Cosser, 2009; Cosser & Sehlola, 2009).

While students in both these HSRC studies were differentiated on the basis of socio-economic status (SES) – SES having been calculated according to parental education and income levels – gender and race were the two main independent variables differentiating student pathways from school to HE. The extent to which SES shaped student trajectories was not sustained through the analysis. There is a compelling argument to use SES rather than race as a key differentiating variable in the present study, however, given that race is not as closely aligned with socio-economic disadvantage as it was under apartheid. In 2005, three-quarters of black African students fell within the low SES category and 8% the high SES category. At the other extreme, two-fifths of white students came from a high socio-economic background, 16% from a low SES background. Coloured and Indian /Asian students fell between these two extremes. As these figures illustrate, there has been some slippage between race and SES over the period – slippage that justifies the emphasis on SES as the primary unit of analysis. So while the architects of the NQF (RSA, 1995: Clause 2) would notionally have had race in mind in formulating the fourth objective of the NQF (“Accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities”), this slippage suggests that SES is more appropriate as a differentiating variable than race. SES is also more apt in a HE context, moreover, because of the association between income as a key differentiator in access to HE and as a key component in the calculation of the SES variable.

From a theoretical perspective, progression through HE is premised, in the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) conceptualisation, upon a credit accumulation model in which credits are “total[ed]” (RSA, 2014). An approach in which learning is additive undermines the complexity of the learning process, failing to recognise the increased sophistication of the acquisition and processing of knowledge. The present study seeks to fill the theoretical gap created by this learning-as-credit-accumulation orientation by positing a conceptual approach that recognises the critical shifts learners make between viewing the game from the sidelines and becoming active participants in it.

³ Four studies are worthy of mention: the Birth to Twenty (Bt20) Programme, launched in 1990 (Wits, 2015); the KwaZulu-Natal Income Dynamics Study, launched in 1998 (UKZN, 2015); the Cape Area Panel Study, launched in 2002 (UCT, 2015a); and the National Income Dynamics Study, launched in 2008 (UCT, 2015b).

Aims and research questions

The present study builds upon the formative HSRC research. Using the data from the 2005-2008 study and triangulating it with student record data from the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS), the study seeks to investigate student pathways and outcomes in the progression of low- and high-SES students into and through HE.

Research questions

The primary research question underpinning the study is:

To what extent have students from low socio-economic backgrounds been able to progress into and through HE in comparison with students from high socio-economic backgrounds?

Embedded in this question are two secondary questions:

1. To what extent have low-SES students been able to achieve success in their chosen studies – that is, complete the qualification programmes in which they have enrolled – in comparison with their high-SES counterparts?
2. What are the factors that have shaped the trajectories of low- versus high-SES students in their passage into and through HE?

The assumption underpinning the formulation of the primary research question is not that students from high socio-economic backgrounds have been uniformly successful in their passage through HE. Instead, the question, as the secondary research questions amplify, is rather about how low-SES students have fared *in comparison with* their high-SES counterparts. Indeed, the study locates this comparison within a larger investigation of the aspirations, programme preferences, enrolment choices, progression through HE and outcomes of South African students.

As question 2 suggests, the study goes beyond the quantitative analysis of student trajectories implied in question 1 to investigate the factors shaping the pathways of students. Using the responses to open-ended questions in the 2008 survey and the data collected through case studies of ten students, the study seeks to ascertain what factors have influenced students in their aspiration formation, programme preferences, and enrolment choices and whether and how the choice behaviour of students from low socio-economic backgrounds differs from that of their high socio-economic background counterparts.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The study comprises nine chapters. The Introduction (Chapter 1), the literature review (Chapter 2), the theoretical framework (Chapter 3) and the research design and methodology (Chapter 4) establish the foundation for the three data chapters that follow. These three chapters investigate: student transition from school to HE (Chapter 5); student progression through HE (Chapter 6); and students' anticipated work and living circumstances beyond HE (Chapter 7). Chapter 8 links the three data chapters through a discussion of the key findings emerging from them. The final chapter (9) proffers some conclusions arising from the study. A more detailed outline is provided below.

Chapter 2 undertakes a review of two main literatures: the literature on student pathways; and the literature on the impact of the NQF on student access, mobility, and progression, especially as it applies to redress. The literature on the factors shaping student pathways identifies three primary sets of influence: whether students are first-generation entrants to HE; what subjects and subject clusters they chose for study at school (particularly for their senior schooling); and what students' SES was prior to their entry into HE. The literature on the impact of the NQF explores the implications, for all students, of the objective of opening up access to HE and increasing mobility and progression through the education system. A summary of the main findings of the literatures reviewed and an identification of the gaps that suggest the need for the present study concludes the chapter.

Chapter 3 develops a conceptual framework for the study, theorised according to two interrelated categories: the external versus internal goods of a practice (a theory propounded by the Scottish philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre – 1981); and formal versus epistemological access to HE (a distinction proposed by the South African education philosopher Wally Morrow – 1993). The chapter goes on to propose a typology of student pathways that serves as the platform upon which the central data chapter of the study (Chapter 6) rests.

Chapter 4 outlines the research design and methodology for the study, first outlining the methodologies used in the study of Grade 12 Learner Aspiration and Destination conducted by the author at the HSRC between 2005 and 2008 and then setting out the research design for the analysis of the data collected that have not previously been analysed. This research design includes an outline of the statistical methods used, an explanation of the unit of differentiation (SES) deployed, a note on the generalisability of the findings, and a reference to the ethics clearance obtained for the study.

Chapter 5 analyses the transition from school to HE of students who had participated in the 2005 baseline survey. The first part of the chapter summarises the work on the student pathways study conducted by the author at the HSRC between 2005 and 2008, focussing on

the aspirations of Grade 12 students in 2005 to proceed to HE and an investigation of aspirant HE students' qualification and programme preferences for study in HE. The second part of the chapter adopts a more nuanced approach to previous disadvantage than skin colour, using SES to distinguish the enrolment destinations of the student cohort in 2006 in relation to HE programme preference in 2005.

Chapter 6 begins with an analysis of student destinations between 2006 and 2008, the data for the analysis having been collected at two points both in the third quarter of the data years in question – 2006 and 2008. Included in this part of the investigation are a factorial analysis of the variables purportedly influencing the 2008 destinations of the 2005 student cohort, a qualitative analysis of student perceptions about their ability to exercise choice in their life situations, and a case study of the life histories of ten students who had participated in the 2005, 2006 and / or 2008 surveys. This is followed by the development of a five-year model for capturing the pathways of students through the HE system between 2005 and 2010 and the derivation, from this model and from the typology proposed as part of the theoretical framework in Chapter 3, of a typology of student pathways into and through HE.

Chapter 7 shifts the focus from the HE period under investigation (2006-2010) to work and life beyond HE. The first part of the chapter explores the professional aspirations of the 2005 cohort, both in 2006 (for those who were enrolled in HE institutions in that year) and in 2008, distinguishing students from different socio-economic backgrounds on the basis of their perceptions about the factors that had influenced their choice of profession. In the second part of the chapter, students from low- and high socio-economic backgrounds are compared in terms of their perceptions regarding their future work situations, their life situations – work and family – ten years' hence, and the likely social conditions in which they will live and work in 2015. The views are those of students who were enrolled in HE institutions in 2008 expressed in 2005 when they were still at school.

Chapter 8 explores the implications of the key findings of the study presented in the foregoing three data chapters. The chapter takes a thematic rather than a strictly sequential approach, organising the discussion under seven rubrics: the transition from school to HE; student progression through HE in relation to the pathway typologies conceptualised in Chapter 3 and Chapter 6 and the five-year pathway model developed in Chapter 6; student capacity for exercising choice; manifestations of the appropriation of the internal goods of a practice (MacIntyre, 1981) and of the acquisition of epistemological access to a programme of study (Morrow, 1993); students' imagined work and life situations beyond HE; the relationship between HE access, redress and success; and NQF facilitation of HE access, progression and mobility for students from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Chapter 9 steps back from the findings and discussion to reflect on the key conclusions arising from the research, the implications of the findings in relation to gaps identified in the literature, and the limitations of the study. It concludes with a section outlining some recommendations arising from the research.

CHAPTER 2 – REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study is on the pathways of students into, through and out of the South African public higher education (HE) system and on the factors that have shaped these pathways differentially for students from low and high socio-economic backgrounds. There are two literatures that inform this focus: the literature on student pathways; and the literature on the impact of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) on student access, mobility, and progression, especially as it applies to redress. The first part of this chapter outlines the key lessons from the two sets of literature, while the second explores the literatures on student pathways and on the NQF from which the key lessons are derived. The third part uses the lessons to provide a platform for the development of a theoretical framework for the study, which is undertaken in Chapter 3.

KEY LESSONS FROM THE LITERATURE

A review of the two sets of literature – on student pathways and on the impact of the NQF on the access, mobility and progression of previously disadvantaged students – demonstrates the following.

The literature on the factors shaping student pathways points to three major sets of influence: 1) Whether students are first-generation entrants to HE; 2) What subjects and subject clusters they chose for study at school (particularly for their senior schooling); and 3) What students' SES was prior to their entry into HE. With regard to 1), the literature shows that first-generation students are less likely than their non-first-generation counterparts to persist in their chosen HE programmes to completion and that, in general, they are less likely than their non-first-generation counterparts to earn a Bachelor's degree. With regard to 2), subject choice at school has been shown to be a strong predictor of progression to HE. But it is the impact of 3) – the socio-economic status (SES) of the student – that appears to play the greatest role in a student's trajectory.

Five dichotomies between high- and low-SES students emerge from the literature. First, while the subject choices of high-SES students tend to be motivated by interest in and enjoyment of the field of study, those of low-SES students tend to be motivated by the desire to enter a particular profession and the employment prospects it offers. Second, while high-SES students tend to choose courses at school that will lead to HE, their low-SES counterparts tend to choose courses that lead to vocational education and training (VET) or to direct entry into the labour market. Third, while the expectations of high-SES students proceeding to HE tend to grow with age (from early to late teens), those of low-SES students tend to diminish the older they get. Fourth, high-SES students tend to have higher and more realistic aspirations of their future educational pathways than do their low-SES counterparts,

whose aspirations tend to be lower and generally less grounded in reality. And fifth, low-SES students drop out of HE at higher rates than do their high-SES counterparts and are therefore retained within the system to programme completion at lower rates than are high-SES students.

The NQF has played into these differences in what is, at best, a misleading way and, at worst, arguably a dangerous way. The literature shows that by combining education and training at every level of the education and training systems (“education & training” is used ubiquitously across the education and training systems), by shifting the focus from the programme (how one achieves a qualification) to the qualification itself, and by promoting the notion that the NQF will open up access to HE and increase mobility and progression through the education system *for all*, it has raised expectations of what is possible but which for the poor – the majority of South Africans – remains unattainable. The NQF has, then, unwittingly compromised educational outcomes ironically by levelling aspiration formation to suggest that access, mobility and progression are equally available to all.

The next section of this chapter investigates the sources of these key lessons from the literature.

STUDENT PATHWAYS AND THE IMPACT OF THE NQF

The ambit of this study – student pathways from school into, through and out of HE and the factors that shape them – suggests the need for a review of the literature on the factors influencing how students make choices with regard to HE. The following section of this chapter therefore begins with a consideration of the literature on student choice behaviour, proposing an organising framework for investigating the decision-making process based on the three-stage model proposed by Campaigne & Hossler (1998).

Framework for investigating student choice behaviour

Fundamentally, any study of student pathways into and through HE is concerned with a range of structural factors (admission requirements, programme availability, and so forth) as well as student behavioural factors (decision to proceed to HE, choice of institution, choice of study programme, and so forth) – all of which falls under the rubric of student choice behaviour.

Student choice behaviour is a complex subject, partly because it has been approached from a number of different perspectives (sociological, psychological, economic), partly because it is informed by the experiences of different students in very different contexts, and partly because its subjects are students of different ages in and across different sectors. These intersections of age and sector are manifested, for example, in: primary school; junior secondary school, senior secondary school, or secondary school as a whole (see Tracey, Robbins & Hofsess, 2005); in the transition from school or from technical or vocational

college to HE (see Cosser with du Toit & Visser, 2004); within HE; in the transition from school, college, or HE to work (see Cosser, 2003); and in the transition from work to college or HE. Some studies are qualitative in nature, involving sets of interviews, often over an extended period, of specially selected subjects (see Hossler, Schmit & Vesper, 1999; Schneider & Stevenson, 1999); some are quantitative in nature, involving large-scale surveys of subjects. Some are “macro-level studies” (Paulsen, 1990: 8), focusing on the relationships between the enrolment behaviour of student groups and various environmental, institutional and student characteristics; others are “micro-level studies” (Paulsen, 1990: 8), focusing on the relationships between the enrolment behaviour of individual students and various environmental, institutional and student characteristics.

Increasingly, studies of student choice behaviour have tried to pull together different strands into, and to extract from them the key elements for, models that explain the phenomenon. Thus we have economic models of student choice behaviour (see Hossler, Braxton & Coopersmith, 1989; Kotler & Fox, 1985), status-attainment models (see Sewell, Haller & Portes, 1969; Sewell and Shah, 1978), models that combine the economic and status-attainment models (see Jackson, 1982; Chapman, 1984; Hanson & Litten, 1982; and Hossler & Gallagher, 1987), and information processing models (see Hossler, Schmit & Vesper, 1999).

Hossler, Schmit & Vesper (1999) organize the findings of their research into student choice behaviour according to the model developed by Hossler & Gallagher (1987), in which three stages are posited in the college-choice process: predisposition; search; and choice. *Predisposition* refers to the plans students develop for education or work after they graduate from secondary school – plans influenced by family background, academic performance, peers, and other secondary school experiences. The *search* stage involves students’ discovering and evaluating possible institutions in which to enrol – identifying which characteristics the ideal institution should embody and which institutions actually embody them. In the *choice* stage, students choose an institution from among those they have identified during the *search* stage, the number of institutions they choose being based on such factors as proximity to home, their academic performance at school, and the socio-economic status of their families (high-ability students from high socio-economic status families, Hossler et al., 1999 posit, might be expected to apply to more than one institution).

The decision to enter HE may be seen as a multi-stage process involving a series of successive decisions finally resulting in enrolment in a HE programme (Hossler, Braxton & Coopersmith, 1989) – decisions not merely about institutional choice. The *choice* stage can therefore be broadened to include study programme. Campaigne & Hossler (1998) take the somewhat narrow conceptualization of the three-stage process developed by Hossler & Gallagher (1987) a step further, identifying three broad stages in the student choice behaviour process:

1. Deciding to enter HE
2. Selecting a particular institution and programme of study; and

3. Persisting in HE.

This three-stage process provides a useful organising framework for reviewing the literature on student choice behaviour. Each of the stages is considered in more detail below.

Deciding to enter higher education

Deciding to enter HE is fundamentally about aspiration for further learning. The literature on aspirations, however, is muddled by different nomenclatures and usages. For example, while Gutman & Akerman (2008: i) speak of “educational and career aspirations”, notwithstanding their acknowledgement elsewhere (in the same publication) that aspirations are broader than mere *educational* aspirations, other authors (Gottfredson, 1981; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Beal & Crockett, 2010) distinguish clearly between *aspirations* and *expectations*. Thus Gottfredson (1981) differentiates aspirations (the realm of possible options) from expectations (the most likely outcome) and Markus & Nurius (1986) distinguish between hoped-for selves and expected selves. Beal & Crockett’s research (2010) confirms empirically the broad distinction between aspirations and expectations.

The focus of the present study is firmly on aspirations, not expectations. All the questions in the Grade 12 Learner Aspiration Questionnaire⁴ (2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2) that deal with what Beal & Crockett (2010: 264) call “future-oriented cognitions”, bar one (7.2), are aspiration-oriented, and have therefore to do with what students hope to achieve. The literature on educational expectations specifically is therefore not, strictly speaking, germane to the study.

Nevertheless, Beal & Crockett (2010) find that future-oriented cognitions, whether aspirations or expectations, shape life trajectories. Not only is there a positive relationship between such cognitions and the pathways students follow; but there is demonstrably a positive and significant correlation between early educational expectations and educational outcomes (Messersmith & Schulenberg, 2008; Ou & Reynolds, 2008). For Maloney (2004), this correlation exists once background factors have been controlled for, and it is manifested by age 25. For Beal & Crockett (2010), the correlation manifests eight years after the formation of expectations.

The findings with regard to aspiration variation according to socio-economic status (SES) appear to be mixed. Schoon (2006) shows that young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds tend to have lower aspirations than their more advantaged counterparts – a finding reinforced by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (2008) in the UK. Citing the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (Economic and Social Data Service, 2013), the Department shows that young people in more deprived areas are:

⁴ This is the instrument that was deployed in 2005 as part of the baseline survey for the present study (see Appendix 1).

- Less likely to say they are going to apply for university (ranging from 71 per cent of least deprived youth to 52 per cent of most deprived youth on a five-point Likert-type scale)
- More likely to say they want to leave full-time education (ranging from 9 per cent of least deprived youth to 16 per cent of most deprived youth on a five-point Likert-type scale); and
- Less likely to think that their friends will stay on at school (ranging from 93 per cent of least deprived youth to 83 per cent of most deprived youth on a five-point Likert-type scale).

On the other hand, Turock, Kintrea, StClair & Benjamin (2009), McKendrick, Scott & Sinclair (2007) and Calder & Cope (2005) show that disadvantaged young people do not have fundamentally different aspirations from their more advantaged peers. In Ethiopia, for example, Tafere (2015) has shown, in a longitudinal study of childhood poverty following the lives of 12,000 children in four developing countries (Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam) over 15 years entitled “Young Lives”, that about 71 per cent of young people at the age of 12 want to achieve a university education – though there is a fairly large disparity between children living in urban and rural areas (80.6 per cent versus 62.8 per cent).

Educational aspiration is also a predictor of continued education. Meng (2009) found that higher children’s aspirations are significant predictors of staying in school, even after controlling for ability, socioeconomic, and demographic variables, and were more important than parental aspirations. On the other hand, Serneels & Dercon (2014), in an Indian iteration of the “Young Lives” study, observed a strong relationship between mothers’ aspirations and their children’s education outcomes: aspiring to one additional year of schooling lifted the grade achieved at age 15 by, on average, 1.8 years.

Aside from SES, age appears also to be a factor in aspiration formation. Previous studies have shown that the aspirations of young people become more realistic (Gottfredson, 1981), are refined (Nurmi, 2004), or decline (Gutman & Akerman, 2008) as they (young people) mature, and that this decline is particularly evident among those facing various obstacles: financial constraints; limited access to computers and private tuition; and leaving school or becoming a parent at an early age (Gutman & Akerman, 2008). Citing research undertaken by The Prince’s Trust (Calder & Cope, 2005), these authors (Gutman & Akerman, 2008) show that while 11 to 14-year-olds are optimistic about getting good, well-paid jobs, their aspirations are lowered as they confront in their late teens the prospect of low-paid, low-skilled jobs, and that by age 18 to 21 the probability of their realising their aspirations appears remote.

In similar vein, Maloney (2004) found that young people from low SES backgrounds tended to revise downward, between the ages of 13 and 16, their expectations of educational achievement. For example, children raised in families on social welfare *decreased*, between the ages of 13 and 16, their expectations of going to university. The corollary is that children reared in families that had never received social welfare benefits *increased*, between the ages of 13 and 16, their expectations of attending university. The attendant widening gap in the

educational expectations of the two groups is matched by university attendance up to age 25 – those who decreased their expectations of HE study failing to attain their HE goals in inverse proportion to the realisation of HE ambitions by those who had increased their expectations of going to university.

Maloney (2004) found also that although there was a positive correlation between family income and the educational expectations *and* eventual educational attainment of students, this relationship did not obtain once other background factors had been controlled for – which means that factors like early academic achievement and enrolment in private schooling become more significant.

The very capacity to aspire, according to Appadurai (2004), is not equally available to all in a society. The well-resourced have a much higher capacity to aspire than do the poorly resourced because:

... the better off, by definition, have a more complex experience of the relation between a wide range of ends and means, because they have a bigger stock of available experiences of the relationship of aspirations and outcomes, because they are in a better position to explore and harvest diverse experiences of exploration and trial, because of their many opportunities to link material goods and immediate opportunities to more general and generic possibilities and options (Appadurai, 2004: 68).

The operative words here that distinguish those with the capacity to aspire from those without it are “complex ... diverse experience[s]”, “bigger stock”, and “opportunities to link”. These words suggest that the frame of reference of those capable of aspiring is much broader and more sophisticated than that of those incapable of doing so. The better resourced “simply have used the map of [their society’s] norms *to explore the future more frequently and more realistically*, and to share this knowledge with one another more routinely than their poorer and weaker neighbors” (Appadurai, 2004: 69; emphasis added).

The italicised words here are critical to understanding, to use a prison metaphor, the incarceration of the poor in the present. Because the poor are imprisoned in the here and now, their *explorations* of the future are bound to be unrealistic in the way that a prisoner’s dreams of what he will do on release from prison are out of touch with a reality to which he has for a greater or lesser period not been exposed. The poorer a person is, to continue the metaphor, the longer he will have been shut off from the “outside world”, the less he will be in touch with any future reality he could conceive.

Selecting a programme of study

Since the interest of this study is in programme rather than institutional choice, the literature review below focuses on selection of study programme.⁵

Choice of programme for HE study is apparently easy for some, difficult for others. There are those whose family background predisposes them towards certain programme preferences; for example, students whose fathers or mothers achieved a BCom at university and are business people may well choose to pursue business-related courses in their HE. At the other end of the spectrum, there are students whose fathers or mothers failed to finish high school and who are unemployed; such students have no guiding light, and will choose courses based on the predominant influence in their socio-cultural milieu (for example, what their friends have chosen to study). Between these extremes is a variety of positions and influences.

Access to information on study choices has been shown to be a key ingredient in the influence mix. McGrath & Millen (2003) ascertained that, in finding out about HE institutions and about courses, students rely most heavily on published sources of advice (to which they attach greater importance than any personal interventions) in the form of prospectuses and websites, and upon Open Days. Chapman & Austin (2002) argue that consumer choices have been sorely neglected in developing countries especially, where information about institutions, programmes, academic reputation, drop-out rates, and labour market prospects are not readily available. A theme running through all the findings about people from whom advice, guidance, or simply information is taken is that the more accessible the source, the greater its perceived importance. Thus the more specialised the adviser, the less important her / his effect is perceived to be.

Similarly, Maringe (2006) finds that, among elements included in programme factors, field of study and details of course, *information* appeared to exert the greatest influence on university choice. Career opportunities associated with HE study, closely followed by realistic consideration of ability and performances in subjects currently studied, exerted a strong influence on subject choice at university. Teacher influence and interest in the subject, Maringe (2006) found, were the next most powerful influences on choices of university courses by students. Among external influences, teachers were considered the strongest factor in students' decisions regarding choice of course, while parents were the least important.

A study of choice of university and programme for HE study by undergraduate Engineering and Business students in Pakistan (Sabir, Ahmad, Ashraf & Ahmad, 2013) in part confirms Maringe's findings. The students ranked university reputation, interest in the subject, and employment prospects as the most important determinants of choice of study programme. But while Engineering students ranked course reputation and advice from teachers as significant influences on their choice of programme, Business students were far less influenced by these

⁵ This is not to downplay the importance of institutional choice, which the author has considered extensively in a previous study (Cosser with du Toit, 2002).

factors in selecting their programme of study. Similarly, Misrana, Aziz, Arsad, Hussaina, Zaki & Sahuri (2012) found, in a study of the choices of matriculation students in Malaysian high schools for or against Engineering at university, that career opportunities and interest in the programme were the most salient influences on their choice for or against Engineering.

Like the Malaysian study, an investigation into the factors influencing students in Nigeria to enrol for a programme in Secretarial studies by Igbinedion (2011) is constrained by the consideration of student choice for or against a particular study programme. Igbinedion's (2011) study is further restricted by his positing of only four factors that may have affected students' choices. The factors were students' gender, parental influence, peer group influence, and interest in the programme area. Male students were most influenced by their peer group (a finding confirmed by a study of the educational choices of Psychology students at the University of Venda, South Africa – Mudhovozi & Chireshe, 2012), followed by parental influence, interest in the programme area, and their gender. Female students, on the other hand, were most influenced by interest in the programme area, followed by peer group influence, their gender, and parental influence. The findings perhaps say as much about stereotypical gendered choices for or against a traditionally female-oriented profession as about the other possible influences.

Thomson's research (2005), based upon data obtained from the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth, endorses the notion that the subjects learners choose to study for the Year 12 certificate have a major influence on the educational and career options open to them after finishing school. Analysing the different subject clusters selected by Australian learners for Year 12, she finds a few significant differences across key variables. In terms of gender, males are more likely than females to participate in advanced mathematics-physical science courses and technical and vocational courses, while females are more likely than males to participate in social sciences and humanities, arts, mixed-subject clusters and in service-clerical vocational subjects. In terms of academic achievement, learners from high achievement levels dominate the areas of advanced mathematics-physical sciences, the mixed area that includes mathematics-physical sciences, as well as social sciences and humanities. Learners from lower achievement levels, on the other hand, are more likely to be taking courses with a vocational focus. In terms of socio-economic status, learners from higher socio-economic levels are more likely to be engaged in the physical sciences and least likely to be engaged in any of the vocational courses. From a linguistic perspective, students with a language background other than English are more likely to study in the mathematics-physical sciences and in business studies areas. How the strong Asian learner contingent in the Australian education system shapes this particular outcome would provide an interesting comparison with the South African outcome on this measure – though this goes beyond the focus of the present thesis.

Another key variable distinguishing student enrolments is parental education. In the United States (US) system, Chen (2005) reveals that, while business and social sciences are the two most popular undergraduate fields for those with a major amongst all categories of student, first-generation students are more likely to have chosen a major in a vocational or technical

field, whereas their counterparts whose parents had a Bachelor's or advanced degree were more likely to choose a major in science, mathematics or engineering, humanities, arts, or social sciences. Weak academic preparation, Chen posits, is one of the factors deterring first-generation students from choosing certain high-skill fields such as mathematics and science. Perceived low-earning potential may also deter them from entering such fields as humanities, arts and social sciences (Montmarquette, Cannings & Mahseredjian, 2002).

Chen (2005) also finds that first-generation students are less likely than students whose parents have a HE to earn a Bachelor's degree, even after factors such as demographic background, academic preparation, enrolment characteristics, credit production, and performance are controlled for. Similarly, persistence in HE to graduation is lower amongst first-generation than among non-first-generation students – though this is not the case once related factors are controlled for. Given the massification of HE in South Africa particularly in the immediate pre- and post-democratic period and the presumed concomitant increase in the number of first-generation students, Chen's findings make for interesting comparison with the South African situation.

Choice of HE study programme in South Africa

The first national study of student choice behaviour in South Africa (Cosser with du Toit, 2002) showed that a range of variables influenced Grade 12 students' preferences for programmes for HE study. The three most salient attitudinal influences were "Interest in [the] field of study", "Opportunities of finding a job in South Africa after qualifying in [the] field", and "Ability to use a qualification in [the] field to contribute towards the development of the country and its people". However, the most significant of all influences, as a multivariate regression analysis of the range of influences, structural and behavioural, on student choice of study programme revealed, was geographical location: the province in which the student went to school. In other words, a structural factor influenced most strongly what programme of study a student at school would choose for HE.

In terms of enrolment, the same three variables influencing programme preference at the aspirational stage were also found to influence *enrolment* decisions most strongly: interest in the field of study; opportunities of finding a job in South Africa after qualifying in the field; and ability to use a qualification to contribute towards the development of the country and its people.

The sequel to the first national study of student choice behaviour in South Africa (Cosser with du Toit, 2002) was the tracer study of a cohort of Grade 12 students conducted by the author at the HSRC between 2005 and 2008 (Cosser, 2009; Cosser & Sehlola, 2009) that provides the foundation for the present study. The main findings of the baseline component of the study (2005) with regard to programme preference for HE were the following:

1. The majority of aspirant students wanted to study towards the achievement of a University General 1st Bachelor's Degree (31 per cent) or a University Professional 1st Bachelor's Degree (26 per cent).
2. Business / Commerce was the most popular programme for HE study (23 per cent), followed by Engineering (17 per cent), Computer Science (14 per cent), Health Sciences (12 per cent), and Law (7 per cent). At the broadest level of analysis, the ratio of Humanities to Business & Commerce to Science, Engineering & Technology preferences was 21 per cent : 23 per cent : 56 per cent.
3. Black African student preference was higher than white student preference for study in all the sciences bar the humanities as well as in Business / Commerce. Preference for study in all the human and social science fields, however, was stronger amongst white than black African students.
4. The top five preferences of male students were Engineering (23 per cent), Computer Science (16 per cent), Business / Commerce (18 per cent), Health Sciences (8 per cent) and Law (7 per cent). The top five preferences of female students were Business / Commerce (26 per cent), Health Sciences (15 per cent), Computer Science (13 per cent), Engineering (12 per cent), and Law (7 per cent).

The main findings of the first tracer study (2006) of the 2005 cohort with regard to enrolment in a HE programme were the following:

1. The most favoured area for programme study was Business / Commerce (30 per cent), followed by Social Sciences (20 per cent) and Engineering and the Natural Sciences (each 15 per cent). From a gender perspective, the most subscribed programme area for male students was Business / Commerce (29 per cent), followed by Engineering (23 per cent), Natural Sciences (19 per cent), and Social Sciences (16 per cent). The most subscribed programme area for female students was also Business / Commerce (32 per cent), followed by Social Sciences (23 per cent) and Humanities and the Natural Sciences (each 12 per cent). From a race perspective, the most subscribed programme area for Africans was Business / Commerce (34 per cent), followed by Social Sciences (19 per cent), Engineering (17 per cent) and Natural Sciences (15 per cent). For whites, the most subscribed programme area was also Business / Commerce (24 per cent), followed closely by Social Sciences (22 per cent) and then by the Natural Sciences (16 per cent) and Engineering (14 per cent).
2. The ratio of Humanities to Business & Commerce to Science, Engineering & Technology enrolments was 34 per cent : 30 per cent : 36 per cent.
3. Grade 12 students had indicated their programme preferences in the 2005 baseline survey. The Tracer Study 1 survey findings revealed a mismatch between 2005 preferences and 2006 enrolments. Programme preference was higher than enrolment in the natural, engineering and health sciences, while in Business / Commerce and the human and social sciences enrolment was higher than programme preference. This suggests either that students wanting to study in the natural, engineering and health sciences changed their minds between the time of the survey (mid-way through their Grade 12 year) and the time of their enrolment early in 2006 or that student

aspirations to study in the natural, engineering and health sciences were thwarted by a combination of insufficient university points and a lack of places for study.

4. There were discrepancies between field of study preference and enrolment amongst students of all races. Higher percentages of students of all races enrolled in the Humanities than had planned to do so – especially African and white students; higher percentages of students of all races – and especially Africans – enrolled in Business / Commerce than had planned to so; and lower percentages of students of all races enrolled in SET programmes than had planned to – the differentials being much higher for Africans (23 percentage points) than for students of the other three race groups. These shifts confirm the broad shift from preference for study in SET to enrolment in Business / Commerce and the Humanities.

Interest in the field of study (4.2), Opportunities of finding a job in South Africa after qualifying in the field (4.1) and Ability to use a qualification in the field to contribute towards the development of the country and its people (4.1) were the three strongest influences on students' study programme choices – as they were in the 2005 baseline survey. Indeed, the same three variables that influenced students' programme choices most strongly in the 2001-2002 student choice behaviour study also influenced students' programme choices five years later – revealing a remarkable consistency in student motivation.

From a race-comparative perspective, African and white respondents to the 2006 tracer study survey were very differently motivated in choosing their fields of study, being most strongly divided on the use of a qualification to contribute towards the development of the country (4.1 for Africans, 3.4 for whites) and – its corollary in this context – on job opportunities abroad (4.1 for white students, 3.3 for African students).

Socio-economic differentiation

In an investigation of the “class of 2006” applicants for HE who applied through UCAS (the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) to study full-time courses in British universities, Purcell, Elias, Adam, Behle, Ellison & Wilton (2007) found that the four most popular influences on course choices were:

1. Enjoyment of the subject(s) / topic(s)
2. Needing to complete the course to enter a particular profession
3. Interest in the content of the course; and
4. The course leading to good employment opportunities in general.

All these influences have to do with interest in the course and employment or career-related reasons. These were most important for all groups across the spectrum. There were, however, differences in the extent to which reasons were more and less popular with different categories of applicant. The most striking difference was that applicants from a higher socio-economic background were more likely to have stated that they had enjoyed studying the subject and were interested in it. Applicants from a lower socio-economic background, on the other hand, were more likely to say they had chosen their course because they wanted to enter

a particular profession or they thought it would lead to good employment opportunities in general. Students from low socio-economic backgrounds are also constrained in their choice of educational programme by limited family financial resources, tending to avoid careers which appear to them to require long periods of training which their finances cannot support (Ngesi, 2003).

Lamb & Ball (1999) find similarly that there are socio-economic differences between students in terms of their programmatic choices. The importance of the differences in the patterns of course-taking is related to the different educational and occupational opportunities that the various courses lead to. Young people from higher socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds, those from private schools, those who are high achievers earlier in school, and students from non-English-speaking backgrounds tend more often to study the courses that are avenues to HE and the professions. Students from lower SES backgrounds, on the other hand, tend to participate in courses that lead to vocational education and training or more often to entry to the labour market without any further formal education or training.

Brooks (2003) found that, amongst students from low SES backgrounds, families play a key role in informing understanding and conceptualisation of the HE market and the perceived institution and subject hierarchies. However, families became less important in relation to young people finding their own place within HE and deciding on a course or institution. The main influence came from the way in which young people positioned themselves in relation to their peers within friendship groups. The diminished role of socio-economic background is observed by Lamb & Ball (1999) too: once socio-economic background, achievement and school differences are controlled for, there remain large variations in the likelihood of participation in further education and training based on subject choice in Year 12. The courses students choose to take, then, are a strong predictor of post-school outcomes. This finding is endorsed by Thomson (2005), who found that particular subjects or subject combinations are traditionally more likely to act as gateways to HE or to vocational education and training, while other combinations are more likely to lead to the workforce or even to unemployment.

On balance, these studies show, SES is a key determinant of aspiration to proceed to HE, of choice of study programme, and of the reasons for programme choice.

Persisting in HE

Research into student persistence in HE in the US has shown that, after all other factors at individual, institutional, and state level have been controlled for, there are substantial gaps in persistence rates by SES at what Chen & St. John (2011: 652) dub “first-institutions”, with high-SES students having 55 per cent higher odds of persisting than their low-SES counterparts.

Persistence and retention are critically important because of their implied link to programme completion. Various US studies show differential completion rates between low- and high-SES students. The 1988 Department of Education longitudinal study of students, which followed 8th grade students over the next 12 years as they progressed from school into HE and thence into the labour market, found vast differences in university completion rates (as measured by completion of Bachelor degrees) according to SES when grouped according to students' 8th grade Mathematics test scores. Figure 2.1 (overwritten Figure A) shows these differences vividly.

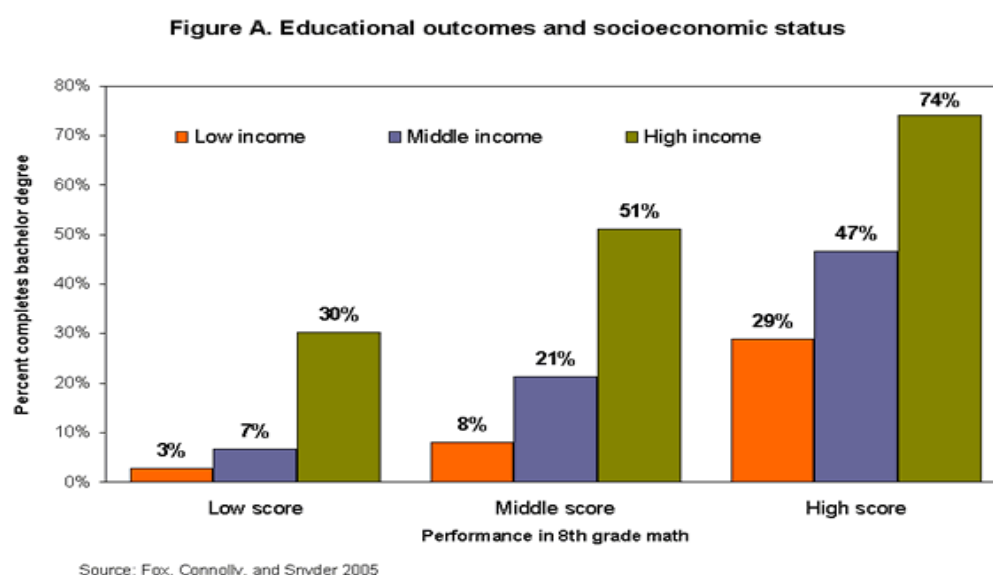


Figure 2.1: Higher education outcomes and socioeconomic status in the US

As Figure 2.1 shows, there is a strong and consistent correlation between income (a proxy here for SES), performance in 8th grade Mathematics, and completion of Bachelor degrees, the lower the income, the lower the 8th grade Mathematics score, the lower the Bachelor degree completion rate.

A variation on this study, deploying parental education and first-generation student status as a variable, tracked all US students who were in the 8th grade in 1988 who had earned a Bachelor's degree by the time they turned 26 years old. Completion rates ranged from 9 per cent for students in the bottom-income quartile and whose parents had not graduated from university to 68 per cent for students in the top-income quartile who had at least one parent who had graduated from university. Students in the high-SES group were therefore more than seven times likelier to have graduated from university than were their first-generation counterparts in the low-SES quartile (Chingos & McPherson, 2011). Similarly, Haveman & Smeeding (2006), in a study that did not deploy an additional variable like mathematics performance in Grade 8 or first-generation HE status, showed that while 51% of the highest SES quartile 8th graders in 1988 had obtained a Bachelor's degree 12 years later, only 7% of students from the lowest SES quartile had done so.

Also at a macro level, The Toolbox Revisited, a study of a national (US) sample of 8th graders (over 12,000 students) scheduled to graduate from high school in 1992 and who were

tracked to the end of December 2000, found that SES played a significant role in Bachelor's degree completion, each gradation in SES (from low- to middle- to high-SES) increasing the probability of degree completion by about 6 per cent (Adelman, 2006). In addition, Adelman (2006) found that being enrolled continuously increases the probability of earning a Bachelor's degree by 43 per cent.

Low- and high-SES students are also differentiated on the basis of the immediacy of their entry into HE. In a 2007 US study, 52 per cent of low-SES students enrolled in a HE institution within two years of leaving high school compared to 83 per cent of high-SES students (Rowan-Kenyon, 2007); and in 2009, 55 per cent of low-SES versus 84 per cent of high-SES school-leavers proceeded directly to HE (Aud, Hussar, Kena, Bianco, Frohlich, Kemp & Tahan, 2011).

US research has also established a link between rates of student persistence and state funding of HE (Titus, 2006; Chen & St. John, 2011). Lack of funding for HE is a well-established cause of student attrition in the South African HE system. For example, the Report of the Ministerial Committee on the Review of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) found that only 19 per cent (125 210) of the recipients of financial aid through the Scheme had graduated, while 48 per cent (316 320) had dropped out or otherwise not completed their studies (DHET, 2010). The remaining 33 per cent (217 470) of NSFAS students were still studying. Of the 67 per cent of NSFAS students who were no longer studying, 28 per cent had graduated and 72 per cent had dropped out or had otherwise not completed their studies. Recipients of financial aid would by definition be low-SES students in need of financial assistance (NSFAS, 2015).

While US research shows consistent differentiation of low- and high-SES students in terms of HE persistence, retention and completion, Australian research paints a different picture. Low-SES students are said to perform far worse than their high-SES counterparts in high school (James, Bexley, Anderson, Devlin, Marginson & Maxwell, 2008) and to be strongly under-represented in the HE system across the continent (Van Krieken, Habibis, Smith, Hutchins, Martin & Maton, 2014); but their pass rates and completion rates are said to be fairly close to those of other students (QUT Vice-Chancellor, 2004). This "levelling out" effect, in which there is strong differential between low-SES performance in Grade 12 (relative to high-SES performance) and subsequent improved low-SES performance in HE, low-SES students performing relatively better than in high school in relation to their high-SES counterparts, is supported by a study based on the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) in which Marks (2007) reports that "a student's regional and socioeconomic background has little influence on their likelihood of completing university. Once students from a lower socioeconomic background enter university, their background does not negatively affect their chances of completing the course" (Marks, 2007: viii).

While there are mixed findings from the US and Australia with regard to the impact of SES on HE progression and completion, the evidence from the UK is less equivocal, showing that low-SES students are more likely to drop out of university, less likely to achieve a

qualification, and less likely to achieve a first or upper-second class pass than are their high-SES counterparts. After an exhaustive analysis of the SES effect in all English universities, Powdthavee & Vignoles (2008: 21) concluded that there are significant differences in dropout across the different SES categories, even once student characteristics and prior achievement have been controlled for. Similarly, in a study of all English-domiciled 18-19-year-olds entering a university in the UK for the first time between 2004/05 and 2009/10 – the same period under investigation in the present study – Crawford (2014: 24) found that students from the highest socio-economic quintile group were 3.4 percentage points less likely to drop-out, 5.3 percentage points more likely to complete their degree and 3.7 percentage points more likely to graduate with a first or 2:1 than those from the lowest socio-economic quintile group.

The factors affecting student retention have come under close scrutiny in research on the topic. Tinto, a leading retention scholar over a number of years, has shown (2006) that research on the reasons for student retention has shifted over a forty-year period, from a focus on individual attributes, skills, and motivation (initially, students who dropped out were deemed “less able, less motivated, and less willing to defer the benefits that college graduation was believed to bestow” – Tinto, 2006: 2) to a focus on the role of the environment, in particular the institution, in student decisions to continue in HE or drop out. A key factor influencing this decision has been shown to be the extent of student involvement (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) and social integration (Tinto, 1987) in the institution – as manifested in and outside the classroom. Students’ engagement with their studies has been shown to be a function both of student characteristics and of lecturer engagement with students, especially in the first year of study (Upcraft, Gardner & Barefoot, 2005).

The NQF and student progression

One of the five major objectives of the NQF – as spelled out in Chapter 1 – is to “facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths”. The NQF, Young (2003), Allais (2003), and Ensor (2003) argue, has failed to achieve not only this objective but the other four as well – in no small measure because of the epistemological confusion created by the concatenation of academic and vocational knowledge (Ensor, 2003). While enhancing the mobility of students is a widely accepted aim of governments wanting to reform qualifications, it is, as Young (2003) points out, difficult to realise in practice.

The articulation of three of the five NQF objectives juxtaposes education, training, and employment in a way that suggests that they are to be considered as a single concept. The second, third, and fourth objectives indicate that the NQF is to:

- Facilitate access to, and mobility and progression within *education, training and career paths*
- Enhance the quality of *education and training*[: and]

- Accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in *education, training and employment opportunities* (RSA, 1995: Clause 2; emphasis added).

“Education and training” has come to supplant “education” and “training” as the catchphrase of the new democratic order for South Africa. While the UK has persisted with “Further Education”, dubbing its vocational education and training (VET) colleges “FE colleges”, and while the UK distinguishes between “universities, HE colleges and other differently funded providers of HE” (HESA, 2013), South Africa added “training” to “education” in all of its manifestations at every level of the system in 1994: hence, General Education and Training (GET), Further Education and Training (FET), and Higher Education and Training (HET). Ensor (2003) in particular has argued for a separation of the siamese (my term) “education and training” on epistemological grounds, claiming for each of the terms a distinctiveness that renders their concatenation highly problematic. While she does not define “training”, Ensor differentiates “formal education” from the NQF thus:

The project of formal education is to ‘specialise the voice’ (Bernstein, 2000a) of acquirers, academic and / or professional, through sustained engagement with content selected and taught by experts over an extended, fairly continuous period of time. The aim of the NQF, on the other hand, is not to specialise the acquisition of content or abilities but to encourage the development of generic competencies (Ensor, 2003: 341).

The “erosion” (Ensor, 2003: 326) of the boundaries between education and training (see also Wheelahan, 2010) and between academic and everyday knowledge has arguably led, extrapolating from Ensor’s argument, to a devaluation of education and a valorization of training that, on their own, neither deserves. The political reasons for this (Allais, 2003) are clear: South Africa wanted a clean break with the apartheid past and needed to create parity between “education” and “training”. Most injuriously, however, the erosion of boundaries has led to an apparent uniformity underpinned by the notion that what happens in universities (education) is the same as what happened in the former technikons (training) since all roads lead to the achievement of recognised (that is, NQF-registered) qualifications. *How* one achieves a qualification (the programme) is less important than the achievement of that (NQF-registered) qualification. From here it is an easy step to believing that formal access (to an institution) is the same as epistemological access (to a discipline) – a myth Morrow (1994) is at pains to dispel, as will be discussed in Chapter 3.

By combining education and training at every level of the education and training systems, by shifting the focus from the programme (how one achieves a qualification) to the qualification itself, and by promoting the notion that the NQF will open up access to HE and increase mobility and progression through the education system *for all*, it has raised expectations of what is possible but which for the poor – the majority of South Africans – remains unattainable. The NQF has, then, unwittingly compromised educational outcomes ironically by levelling aspiration formation to suggest that access, mobility and progression are equally available to all.

The elision of “education” and “training” is accompanied, in the NQF literature (see RSA, 2014), by a potentially dangerous notion: that of credit accumulation. The intention behind credit accumulation and transfer models is admirable: they provide a mechanism for identifying the level that has been achieved in a particular subject and for facilitating the transfer of credit points between different learning programmes (SCQF, 2015) within a paradigm of lifelong learning. A concomitant framework of level descriptors (see, for example, SCQF, 2012) allows one to characterise a particular level of learning. But “credit accumulation” in itself suggests that learning is not merely cumulative (as per the developmental stages outlined by Piaget – 1964) but “something that has been collected, gathered, heaped, etc.” (Collins English Dictionary, 2003).

Indeed, from a theoretical perspective, progression through HE is premised, in the view of the South African Qualifications Authority (RSA, 2014), upon a credit accumulation model in which credits – conceived of as “the *amount of learning* contained in a qualification or part-qualification” – are “total[ed]” (RSA, 2014: 6; emphasis added). An approach in which learning is additive and quantifiable undermines the complexity of the learning process, failing to recognise the increased sophistication of the acquisition and processing of knowledge. As Bekhradnia (2004: 8) says, “even where common systems of credit are agreed and in force, these only give an account of the *volume* of learning that has been achieved. Alone they say nothing about the content, its relevance to other courses that a student may wish to pursue, nor, crucially, about the standard that the student has achieved” (emphasis added).

Meanings of access, mobility and progression in the literature

On closer inspection, the literature on how the NQF has facilitated access to, and mobility and progression within, career paths is scant. Whether the academic literature on the development and implementation of national qualification frameworks as a whole is limited, as Ernsberger (2012) speculates, because of the technical nature of the reforms introduced, the predominant focus of the reforms on vocational education, or the fact that the reforms are in their early stages is unknown; perhaps a combination of these reasons is at play. Or it may be that the objective is not really measurable – which renders it a high-sounding notion rather than an objective. Paterson (cited in Keavy, 2005: no publication details) asked in the wake of the NQF Impact Assessment (DoE & DoL, 2002) whether some of the NQF objectives – including the objective regarding access and mobility – are not in fact intractable ideals and therefore impossible to achieve.

SAQA’s paternalistic explanation of the meaning of *access*, *progression* and *mobility* to learners in search of career advice appears to reinforce this notion:

If you imagine a bridge you will know that a bridge connects communities, it allows people to flow, and supports the economic and social development of a community.

We encourage you to see the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as the most appropriate bridge to life-long learning.

If you read the objectives of the NQF in the NQF Act 67 of 2008 you will discover words like access, mobility, progression, career path, and full personal development. When thinking about the bridge metaphor these words; access, mobility, progression and path come to life. You can easily imagine how the bridge opens doors to new opportunities; enables travel to new unexplored places, and ultimately supports the rise to new heights of achievement (SAQA, 2015: n.p.).

The mixed bridge-door metaphor (“bridge opens doors”), the travel metaphor and the ascendancy metaphor are even more devoid of meaning than are the original use of the three terms (*access*, *progression*, and *mobility*) in the SAQA Act.

When we delve more deeply into the referents of these terms, we understand that the NQF was designed with social transformation in mind (Allais, 2003; Granville, 2004) and that it has its roots in the labour movement of the early 1970s (SAQA, 2014). Citing Kbone (1997), Ernsberger (2012: 20) argues that “the operational design of the framework supported wider political aspirations to undermine the hegemony enjoyed by white dominated schools and increase access to good quality education in South Africa.” While the NQF notionally sought to address educational issues (such as pedagogy) in the education system, then, its real thrust was transformation of a schooling and HE system hitherto inaccessible to the black majority but more importantly of a technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system and of an economic system that had systematically benefited whites at the expense of the other races.

The employment bent is clearly seen in SAQA’s explanation for why it chose a national qualifications framework: “When learners know that there are clear learning pathways which provide access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths, they are more inclined to improve their skills and knowledge, *as such improvements increase their employment opportunities* (SAQA, 2014: n.p.; emphasis added).

In its 2002 study of the impact of the NQF, the Departments of Education & Labour argued that though the NQF was an important lever of government:

the goals themselves – access, mobility, progression, quality, redress and development – *are wider and deeper than the NQF*. They describe the major part of the permanent combined education and training agendas of the Ministries of Education and Labour, and require a range of other actions, including appropriate laws and policies, institutions...” (DoE and DoL, 2002:65; emphasis added).

Only five years after the implementation of the NQF, the government was itself reassessing the overarching role of the NQF in the transformation of the education and training systems, recognising that the meanings of access, mobility and progression went beyond – the implication seems to be – those ascribed to them in the SAQA Act. To this day there are no

empirical studies of the extent to which the NQF has facilitated their realisation – a major impetus for the present study.

Access, mobility and progression in the NQFs of other countries

South Africa's attempt at implementing an NQF is acknowledged as being far more ambitious than those of other countries (see, for example, Ernsberger, 2012). The social transformation agenda clearly played a major part in this ambition. Perhaps precisely because of the difficulty of measuring progress against the lofty ideals of such an agenda, Keevy, a SAQA official at the time of writing the following, curiously diluted the purpose of the South African NQF:

As a final point, it may very well be that the feasibility of the purpose of the NQF, as exemplified in the NQF objectives, may not be of significant concern to NQF implementers. It may be that progress, however slow, towards some partial attainment of the purpose is satisfactory, even to the extent that the covert purposes of the NQF may be preferred over the overt purposes. Stated differently, government may be more interested to embed aspects such as lifelong learning and standardisation than, for example, the quality of the education and training system (Keevy, 2005: 251).

By contrast, the main emphasis of the national qualification frameworks of countries such as Lesotho, New Zealand (see Richardson, 1999), Scotland and Ireland is on access and progression (Tuck, Keevy & Hart, 2004: 3). Unlike South Africa's, the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework's (SCQF's) aims did not extend to developing new qualifications, standards or curricula or to enhancing the quality of education and training. The SCQF "is not a regulatory framework" (Raffe, 2003: 241) but "an enabling or descriptive framework" (Keevy, 2005: 140). Indeed, according to the European Commission (2004: 1), the aim of qualifications frameworks "is to clarify (for students, parents, employers and policy makers) the main routes to a particular qualification, how progress within the system can be made, to which extent transfer is allowed and on which basis decisions on recognition are taken."

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

The idealism embodied in and the epistemological confusion brought about by the NQF has undeniably shaped students' access to and their progression through HE. But this is not the major impetus for the present study. The fact that transformation, through *redress*, was the real purpose of the NQF and the recognition that access, mobility and progression are important chiefly in so far as they offer educational opportunity to previously disadvantaged students suggest, given the lack of empirical studies on the impact of the NQF objectives on the South African education system, the importance of tracking the differential pathways of previously advantaged and previously disadvantaged students from school into and through HE.

From a theoretical perspective, the notion of learning as “credit accumulation” has been shown, at least in one of its manifestations, to be flawed. The present study seeks to fill the theoretical gap created by this learning-as-credit-accumulation orientation by positing a conceptual approach that recognises the critical shifts learners make between viewing the game from the sidelines and becoming active participants in it – as the framework in the next chapter seeks to demonstrate.

The three-stage process proposed by Campaigne & Hossler (1998) – deciding to enter HE, selecting a particular institution and programme of study, and persisting in HE – provides a useful framework for investigating student pathways from school into and through HE. While longitudinal studies tracking student cohorts from one year of study to the next over a predetermined period are commonplace in the US (as the 1988 longitudinal study reviewed above illustrates), the dearth of empirical studies of student pathways through the education system in South Africa suggests the need for a study that tracks students from school into HE, focusing on the correlation between their aspirations and preferences on the one hand and their enrolment behaviour on the other, and thence through the HE system to completion / non completion within a defined timeframe. Given the legacy of apartheid, the effects of which have been felt well into the democratic period, logically the particular emphasis in any such pathway study in South Africa should be on whether students disadvantaged by that system have enjoyed HE opportunities and been able to compete on an equal footing with their previously advantaged counterparts.

Beyond these directions suggested by, or arising from lack of treatment in, the literature, two issues germane to a study of student pathways into and through HE emerge from the literature review. First, the section on key lessons from the literature indicates that subject choice at school is a strong predictor of progression to HE. But there is a gap in our understanding of the correlation between individual student preference of a particular programme of study in HE and actual enrolment in that programme. This is one of the questions the study seeks to address. And second, the findings on the impact of SES on student pathways call for corroboration in the South African context in response to four key questions:

1. Are the subject choices of South African high-SES students indeed motivated by interest in and enjoyment of the subject rather than (as for low-SES students) by employment prospects?
2. Are the educational aspirations of high-SES students indeed higher and more realistic than those of their low-SES counterparts?
3. Is low-SES student attrition indeed higher than that of high-SES students? And
4. Do high-SES students complete at higher rates than low-SES students do?

The next chapter will propose a theoretical model for accommodating the presumed differentiation of student pathways emerging from these questions.

CHAPTER 3 – THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will propose a theoretical framework that can account for, and explicate, the differentiation of student pathways into, through and out of higher education. The pathways students follow are a function of various factors, which are theorised below according to two interrelated categories: motivation through the external versus internal goods of participating in a practice; and formal access to HE versus epistemological access to the knowledge it offers. A typology of student pathways is proposed in the course of the chapter that serves as a platform upon which the study rests.

Beyond this typology, which accommodates the quantitative dimension of the study, the chapter proposes a model for qualitative analysis based on the notion of students' language possessing the explanatory power to delve below the surface of the statistics to disclose world view.

LEARNING AS ACCUMULATION OF CREDITS

The notion of learning as credit accumulation was adumbrated in Chapter 2. According to this conception, learning is additive, a matter of summing credits to constitute a qualification. Key terminology associated with this conception in the SAQA environment is “amount of learning”, “totalling of ... credits”, and “one (1) credit [being] equated to ten (10) notional hours of learning” (RSA, 2014: 6). Learning is reduced to a mathematical formula based on the notional length of time the average student takes to complete a unit of learning. While SAQA has altered its unit standards-based terminology – largely, I would argue, in response to a backlash from universities urged to include “unit standards-based qualifications” (RSA, 1998: Section 5. [1] b.) alongside “whole qualifications” – it retains in its definition of “Part-qualification” the notion of learning as a unit, as in: “Part-qualification means an assessed unit of learning that is registered as part of a qualification” – RSA, 2014: 7).

This conception of learning as accumulation of credits misrepresents, unless it is carefully specified, the complexity of the learning process. While there are many learning theories – some of which may come to be supplanted by educational neuroscience (see, for example, Wolfe, 2010) – those premised upon the notion that successive learning activities build upon previous learning whether in a linear or cyclical fashion are widely accepted as offering the most plausible account of how we learn. So whether one is considering cognitive theories that focus on patterns in learning (see, for example, Merriam, 2007), memory-based theories (see, for example, Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968; Baddeley & Hitch, 1974; Lilienfeld, Lynn, Namy & Woolf, 2010), cognitive load and information processing theory (see, for example, DeJong,

2010), or constructivism (Piaget, 1964) and its elaborations, one accepts that learning is premised upon the appropriation of increasing complexity. Credit accumulation, in its most reductionist form, treats “units” of learning as isomorphic structures rather than building blocks.

While no direct correlation between cognitive learning theory and student pathways is intended through this critique of credit accumulation, it is clear that the conception of qualification attainment as accumulation of credits is under-theorised. The following theories are posited as alternatives to the credit accumulation approach.

EXTERNAL VERSUS INTERNAL GOODS OF A PRACTICE

An analysis of MacIntyre’s (1981) distinction between internal and external goods of participating in a practice in his definition of virtue provides a useful starting point for the development of a theory of student pathways.

MacIntyre (1981: 175-176) offers the example of an intellectually gifted seven-year-old child whom his imagined narrator wants to teach to play chess. The child does not particularly want to learn how to play the game. So the narrator offers the child an incentive of the confectionery kind (50c worth of candy) to play chess once a week, adding that he will play in such a way as to promote the child’s chances of winning every time – and also thereby providing the child with every incentive to cheat. The narrator’s hope, however, as the weekly games of chess unfold, is that the child will discover, in playing the game, internal rewards (the development of “analytical skill, strategic imagination and competitive intensity”) that come to outweigh the external incentive of candy. The primary motivation for playing chess becomes progressively, therefore, trying to excel, in whatever way the game of chess demands – meaning that “if the child cheats, he or she will be defeating not me, but himself or herself.”

The candy, extending the metaphor to the adult world, can be equated to those external rewards that can be earned through the participation in a practice like prestige, status and money that drive much human endeavour. The internal rewards, on the other hand, are those rewards that are inherent in or intrinsic to participating in the particular practice, identifiable only “by the experience of participating in the practice in question” (MacIntyre, 1981: 176). While external rewards are defined by unhealthy competition – competition with others that inevitably sets up power relations (“the more one has of them, the less there is for other people”), internal rewards are characterised by competition with oneself, in which the only “loser” is one’s previously poorer performance in the practice in question. Such a conception provides a useful means of ascertaining the extent to which students have made the transition, in the context of student pathways, from being on the fringes of the learning programme to being actively engaged with its inner workings.

External versus internal goods in the context of student pathways

For the purposes of our theoretical framework, there are three stages at which we can conceptualise the distinction between the attainment of internal and external goods through participating in a practice. The first is the aspiration stage (Grade 12); the second is at entry into a HE programme; and the third is during the course of the programme. More specifically, it will be possible, from the data collected in the course of the student pathways study, to assess the orientation of factors (internal versus external goods of a practice) that influenced students enrolled in their chosen programme of study to enrol as they did in 2006 (Cosser & Sehlola, 2009); and it will be possible to assess the same orientation (internal versus external) that influenced the same set of students (those students retained in the higher education system, that is) in 2008. The explanatory power of the conceptual framework based upon the MacIntyre model, however, lies in its ability to gauge the extent to which student orientation has either changed over the two-year period (from an external to an internal orientation or from an internal to an external orientation) or has remained the same (whether internal or external) over the period as a result of enrolment and persistence in the programme of study.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL ACCESS TO A STUDY PROGRAMME

Part of measuring whether and how student perceptions of the factors influencing their study trajectories have changed over their period of study involves ascertaining the extent to which students have appropriated for themselves what MacIntyre would call the internal goods of the programme. Morrow's distinction (1993) between formal and epistemological access provides a useful way to conceptualise this point. While formal access denotes institutional access to the programme of study, epistemological access entails engaging with the concepts, debates and methods of the field of study, "learning how to become a participant in an academic practice" (Morrow, 1994: 40).

The attainment of epistemological access has been shown by Cross & Johnson (2008) and by Cross, Shalem, Backhouse, Adam & Baloyi (2010) to depend in part on the degree of student engagement with three conceptual domains based on Bernstein's analysis (1990, 2000) of intellectual fields and pedagogical identities: the official domain (the dominant institutional culture); the pedagogic domain (the academic culture and practices of the institution); and the social domain (student agency and "positionality" within that domain). Cross et al. (2010: 92) categorise students according to their ability to negotiate their way through these three domains to "engage meaningfully with their studies".

Notwithstanding the argument that students need to successfully negotiate these three domains to engage meaningfully with their studies, it is the second of these – the pedagogic domain – with which the thesis is chiefly concerned. How, then, does students' ability to break into the academic culture to attain the epistemological access that will enable them to become "insiders" in their chosen disciplines influence their trajectories?

TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY FOR THE STUDY OF STUDENT PATHWAYS

MacIntyre's distinction between internal and external goods provides us with a means of differentiating between the factors that motivate students to enrol for and continue with particular programmes and therefore influence dis/continuity within student pathways. And Morrow's distinction between formal and epistemological access highlights the key difference between access to an institution (a largely passive process, based albeit in part on prior academic performance at school) and access to an academic discipline (an active engagement, based on the student's efforts in coming to terms with the [language of] the discipline – what Torgesen, Houston, Rissman, Decker, Roberts, Vaughn, Wexler, Francis, Rivera & Lesaux [2007] mean by “academic literacy”). Clearly epistemological access depends not merely on external forces; the student's own background and his / her disposition must play a part in shaping the nature and extent of engagement with the study programme and the supposed degree of epistemological access to it.

In their positing of the three domains – official, pedagogic, and social – students have to negotiate in the process of seeking epistemological access to their chosen study programmes, Cross et al. (2010) identify three types of student:

Category A: students whose social and learning orientation matches what is expected of them at [the institution] and who *have the resources to adjust to the [institutional] environment* and engage meaningfully with their studies.

Category B: students who do not share the social and learning orientation required at [the institution], but who take it upon themselves *to work hard and find the resources they need*. These students can benefit from personal care and support given by individual lecturers.

Category C: students who do not share the required social and learning orientation and *do not have the resources* to negotiate their needs in their own terms. Students of this kind need sustainable and continuous care and guidance to socialise them into sound academic practice (Cross et al., 2010: 92-3; emphasis added).

As this typology suggests, student background plays a major role in determining epistemological access, which is easiest for students (Category A) for whom there is a *match* between their social and learning orientation and institutional expectations, less easy for students for whom there is no match but who can *find* the necessary resources, and hardest for students for whom there is no match and who have no resources. The added emphasis in the categorization of the three types of student in the excerpt above illustrates the dichotomy between, at the one extreme, *having the resources* (Category A), at the other extreme *not having the resources* (Category C), and, between the two poles, *being able to work hard and find the resources*.

While the typology proposed by Cross et al. (2010) has broad appeal in differentiating three types of student, however, it is mono-dimensional: the typology was developed by teachers in one HE institution who assumed homogeneity with respect to students' motivation for entering teaching. In other words, it does not take into account the extent to which students are driven by the external versus the internal goods of the practice – a conception which MacIntyre's distinction enables us to draw in an analysis of student engagement with a programme of study.

Formal and epistemological access in the context of student pathways

Morrow (1994) sets up a dichotomy between formal and epistemological access, between access to an institution (a physical access) and access to an academic discipline (a less tangible, non-physical, access). The context for his construction of this dichotomy explains the almost binary nature of its formulation: he is intent on showing that achieving epistemological access to an academic practice, paradoxically, “is emancipation from particular forms of domination” (Morrow, 1994: 45) – in the context of attempts by certain students and politicians to equate academic practice as manifested in institutions of higher learning in immediate post-apartheid South Africa with apartheid domination.

Taken beyond this context, however, there is not so much a dichotomy between formal and epistemological access as a spectrum of access between the two. Morrow seems to present the two kinds of access as successive: the achievement of formal access is a *precursor* to the subsequent possible achievement of epistemological access. But formal access may well carry with it, in the context of students for whom there is a strong match between what is expected of them at university and the (non-physical) resources they are able to bring to their engagement with the academic practice (Category A students in the typology of Cross et al., 2010), a predisposition for the achievement of epistemological access which is a function largely of their SES and schooling. In other words, Morrow's conception ignores the personal motivation for participating in a practice that may drive certain students – just getting a university degree and / or acquiring skills for employment versus engaging in something they are likely to experience as internally rewarding.

This example of a Category A student suggests that there may be different types and degrees of combination of formal and epistemological access that go to make up a typology of student access to higher education. Such a typology does not distinguish as firmly as Morrow does between institutional and academic programme access: the axis revolves not around institutional / programmatic access (with its correlative of physical / disciplinary access) but around the extent of academic preparedness, which is in turn a function of SES, schooling, and innate ability.

A typology for student pathways

A useful precursor, methodologically and temporally, to a consideration of a *HE* typology for student pathways is Lewin's "zones of exclusion" (Lewin, 2007: 21-29), a model for considering children's access to and pathways through basic education (that is, Grade 1 to Grade 9 in most school systems). Lewin identifies six zones (seven if one includes pre-school):⁶

- Zone 1: Children denied *access* – that is, children who have never been to, and are unlikely ever to attend, school
- Zone 2: Children excluded after initial entry – that is, children who enter primary school but who *drop out* before completing primary school
- Zone 3: Children at risk of dropping out – that is, children who enter primary school and are enrolled but are "at risk" of dropping out before completion as a result of irregular attendance, low achievement, and silent exclusion from worthwhile learning
- Zone 4: Children excluded from lower secondary school – that is, children who fail to make the *transition* to secondary school grades as a result of failing to be selected, being unable to afford the costs, or dropping out before successful completion of primary school
- Zone 5: Children who enter secondary school but who drop out before completing the cycle [the "cycle" here means lower secondary schooling, which completes the cycle of basic education]
- Zone 6: Children at risk of drop-out – that is, children who enter secondary school but who are "at risk" of dropping out before completion as a result of irregular attendance, low achievement and silent exclusion from worthwhile learning (Lewin, 2007: 22-24; emphasis added).

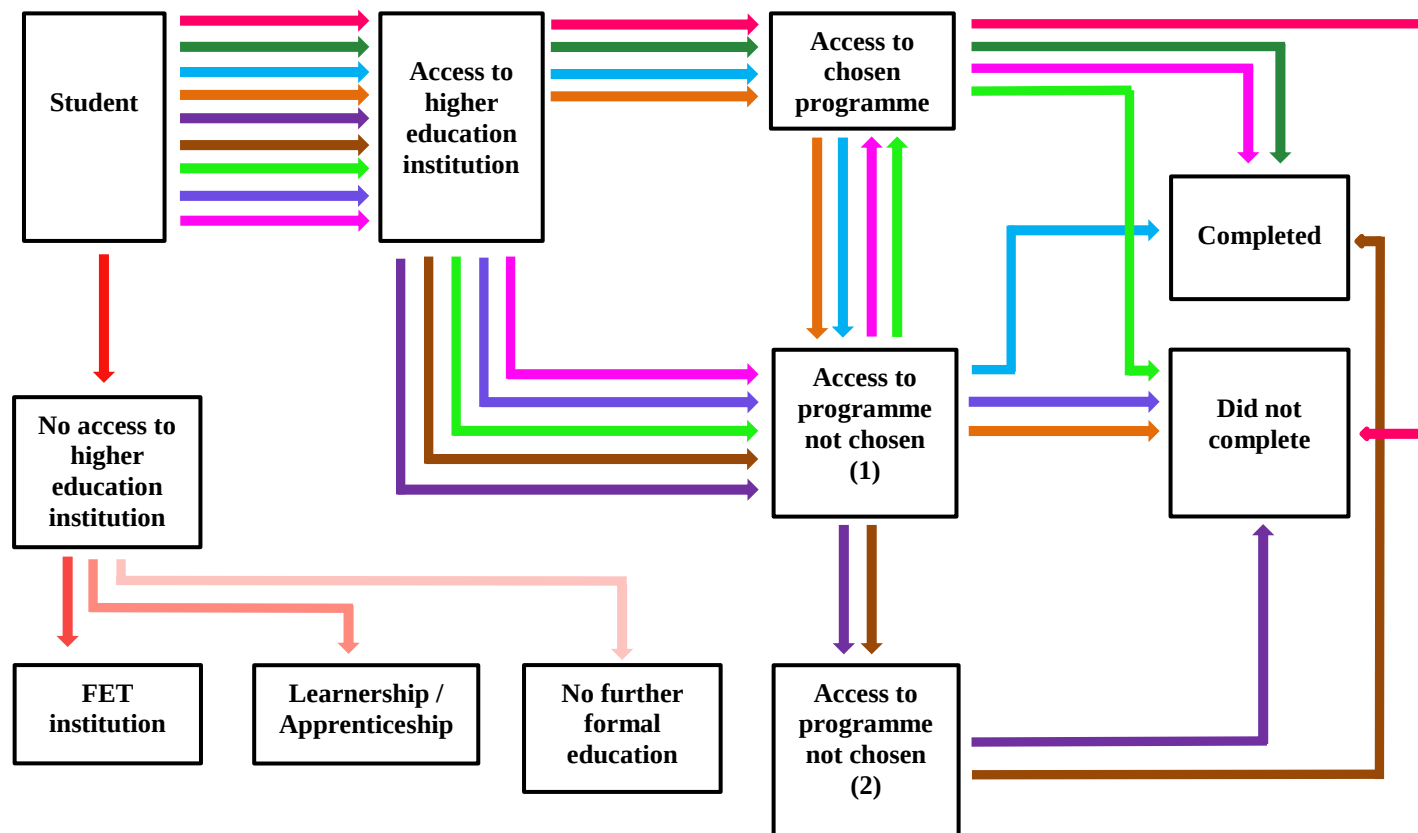
Three important lessons emerge from Lewin's model. First, the emphasized words – *access*, *drop-out*, *transition* – are key concepts not only for basic education but for HE as well, as will become evident as the typology developed below demonstrates and as the present study unfolds. Second, Lewin's model is incremental, ranging from no access to basic education (Zone 1) to access to high school but with the risk of drop-out (Zone 6). This incrementalism is important to show in any model dealing with progression through an education system. And third, Lewin's notion of "silent exclusion from worthwhile learning" is a useful analogue to Morrow's concept of epistemological access, suggesting as it does that children are "at school" but not "in school" (in the fullest sense of the word *in*) – their minds not immersed in the learning process.

⁶ Pre-school would be Zone 0.

Lewin's model provides a "basic" platform for the development of a typology of HE student trajectories. At the one pole of the access continuum are students who could not gain even formal access to a HE institution, at the other end students (Type A in Cross et al., 2010) who enjoyed full formal and epistemological access: they obtained formal entry to a HE institution, brought with them the [non-physical] resources to facilitate the acquisition of full epistemological access to the academic programmes in which they enrolled, and graduated with a qualification in their chosen academic programmes. Between these two poles are a range of pathways. The full spectrum of types proposed here is as follows:

1. Students who failed to access a HE institution. The three progressively fading red arrows below the box "No access to higher education institution" indicate the three main possible destinations of students who did not access HE: FET institution; labour market; or no economic activity.
2. Students who accessed a HE institution but not their chosen academic programme and who switched to another programme, also not their chosen programme, but did not complete this other programme.
3. Students who accessed a HE institution but not their chosen academic programme and who switched to their chosen programme in the course of their studies but did not complete this programme.
4. Students who accessed a HE institution and their chosen academic programme and who switched to another programme in the course of their studies but did not complete this programme.
5. Students who accessed a HE institution but not their chosen academic programme and did not complete this programme.
6. Students who accessed a HE institution and their chosen academic programme but did not complete the programme.
7. Students who accessed a HE institution but not their chosen academic programme and who switched to another programme, also not their chosen programme, and completed this other programme.
8. Students who accessed a HE institution but not their chosen academic programme and who switched to their chosen programme in the course of their studies and completed this programme.
9. Students who accessed a HE institution and their chosen academic programme and who switched to another programme in the course of their studies and completed this programme.
10. Students who accessed a HE institution and their chosen academic programme and completed this programme.

The following diagram (Figure 3.1) illustrates the full range of trajectories students might have followed from school into, through and out of HE as per these ten types. Coloured arrows are used to illustrate the trajectories, which are numbered according to the above descriptions.



Source: Author

Key: → = 1 → = 2 → = 3 → = 4 → = 5
→ = 6 → = 7 → = 8 → = 9 → = 10

Figure 3.1: Typology of pathways into, through, and out of higher education, by institutional and programme access

This diagram demonstrates the basic movement from institutional to programmatic access (with its various permutations) to completion or non-completion, each of the eight pathways between the poles of no access (pathway 1) and access to institution and programme of choice followed by completion (the classic linear pathway – 10) reflecting a diminution of the complexity involved in the steps towards non-completion and then completion. As such it is a model one can use to plot the trajectories of a cohort of students. But it will not encompass every possible pathway; an analysis of the pathway of every individual student in a cohort will elaborate and refine the model where necessary. That will be one of the aims of this thesis.

The key aspect elucidated earlier that is not accommodated in the above typology, however, is epistemological access. Diagrams of the kind presented in Figure 3.1 cannot capture the nuances that epistemological access connotes. On one interpretation of *epistemological access*, while students may have completed a programme, as indicated in Figure 3.1, they may not have become experts in the academic practice in question but simply have “done enough” to successfully complete the course. The extent of epistemological access achieved – like the extent to which the internal goods of a practice have been mastered – can, however, be ascertained from an analysis of the reflections of students on their studies as encapsulated in the words they use to describe them – the subject of the next section.

LANGUAGE AS ENCODER OF WORLD VIEW

It has become widely accepted, since the seminal work of the Prussian philologist Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835), that language encodes world view. Halliday (1971) dubs this the ideational function:

Language serves for the expression of content: it has a representational, or, as I would prefer to call it, an *ideational*, function ... the speaker or writer embodies in language his experience of the phenomena of the real world; and this includes his experience of the internal world of his own consciousness: his reactions, cognitions, and perceptions, and also his linguistic acts of speaking and understanding (Halliday, 1971: 332).

Fowler’s (1986) explication of Halliday’s view is particularly useful in differentiating individuals of different socio-economic strata:

Now experience, and its coding in language, differs from individual to individual: not absolutely, nor randomly, but according to conventions which govern *the individual’s roles in the social and economic system*. S/he is born into a family at a specific place in a much wider social network, with access to some patterns of interaction and not to many others; similarly, specific limitations of experience and contacts extend through school, work, and the social affiliations of maturity. In consequence, *our experience* and thus what we know about and need to have encoded in our semantic resources, *is personal but is also a product of our position in socio-economic relations*. Under these constraints, *our semantic repertoire and the structure of our language are*

similar to the resources of people who have had similar paths through life, and significantly different from others (Fowler, 1986: 148; emphasis added).

The italicised words point up the role of SES – “our position in socio-economic relations” – in constraining not only our language but the world view which it reflects. It is precisely the differentiation of those who have had one kind of path through life from those who have had another that enables us to characterise those who have “had similar paths through life”.

The inclusion of qualitative data in the study, in the form of transcriptions of interviews with selected students, enables us to go beyond the statistical profile of socio-economically differentiated student pathways to investigate the language that characterises the “reactions, cognitions, and perceptions” (Halliday, 1971: 336) of individual students. And while there is no set model for discourse analysis, the investigation of students’ language in this thesis, loosely modelled on the work of Roger Fowler on point of view and on meaning and world-view as embodied in *Linguistic Criticism* (Fowler, 1986: 127-167), will attempt to ascertain the extent to which students have made the shift from achieving formal access to an institution to appropriating for themselves, in the language of MacIntyre (1981), the internal goods of the practice – and hence to achieving the epistemological access that is synonymous with the attainment of success in a programme of study.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY

The theoretical framework arrived at through the delineation of the pathway typology in Figure 3.1, together with the platform for analysing individual student utterances adumbrated above, will form the foundation of the study that follows. In the final analysis, the study seeks to explore, through the reflexivity of quantitative and qualitative analyses, the extent to which the appropriation of the internal goods of a practice and the achievement of epistemological access have been realised in the differential pathways of students from low and high socio-economic backgrounds.

CHAPTER 4 – RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The genesis of this thesis, as alluded to in Chapter 1, is a four-year study of student choice behaviour undertaken by the author at the HSRC between 2005 and 2008. In that study, three surveys and ten case studies⁷ were conducted to ascertain the effect of a number of variables, background and behavioural, on students' aspirations and behaviours with regard to their future study and career trajectories.

This chapter begins with a summary of the methodology of the work undertaken as part of that study between 2005 and 2008 and then proceeds to outline the research design and methodology for the present study.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS WORK ON THE STUDENT PATHWAYS STUDY

The present study forms the third and final part of the student pathways study conducted by the author at the HSRC – the findings of the first two parts (the baseline survey and the first tracer survey) having been reported in Cosser (2009) and Cosser & Sehlola (2009) respectively. This sub-section summarises the methodology used in the study.

Baseline survey

A baseline survey was conducted among a random sample of Grade 12 students⁸ in schools across South Africa stratified by school pass rate in the 2004 Senior Certificate examination: a 10 per cent sample of Grade 12 students (n = 771 schools, approximately 58,965 students).⁹ The survey was administered through the deployment of a questionnaire designed to be completed by Grade 12 students in a classroom under the supervision of a senior school teacher. A total of 20,659 students participated in the survey.

The methodology deployed for the baseline survey is outlined more fully, and the findings are presented in full, in Cosser (2009).

⁷ The instruments used in the baseline and two tracer surveys are contained in Appendix 4, Appendix 5, and Appendix 6 respectively.

⁸ While the then Department of Education used the term “learners”, the term “students” is preferred in this study.

⁹ Since the sample frame is based on the 2004 Senior Certificate database, the number of students in the sample is an estimate.

Tracer surveys 1 and 2

In 2006, a tracer study was conducted among students who had participated in the Grade 12 Learner Aspiration Survey – the baseline component of the student pathways study. The sample frame for Tracer Study 1¹⁰ was derived from a database of the addresses of students who had participated in the 2005 survey – the realised sample – as supplied by students themselves. Forty-seven per cent of the baseline survey participating schools and 85.4 per cent of the baseline survey students were represented in the Tracer study 1 sample frame. Just under one quarter (24 per cent) of those students included in the sample frame responded to the survey.

As in the case of Tracer Study 1, the research for Tracer Study 2 involved the collection of primary data by means of a cross-sectional quantitative survey research design. The key methodological steps for the survey design duplicate those taken for the Tracer Study 1 survey.

Survey progression from baseline survey to Tracer Study 2

The following diagram outlines the progression of the three surveys undertaken as part of the study:

2005	2006	2008
Baseline survey	Tracer survey 1	Tracer survey 2
Sample: 771 schools 58,965 learners	Sample: 17,642 learners	Sample: 4,278 learners
Stratum 1: 10% Stratum 2: 31% Stratum 3: 59%		
Response: 362 schools 20,659 learners (47% of schools; 35% of learners)	Response: 4,278 learners (24%)	Response: 920 learners (22%)
Stratum 1: 5% Stratum 2: 23% Stratum 3: 72%		

Figure 4.1: Grade 12 student pathways project: Survey progression

¹⁰ While the first tracer survey was called the “Grade 12 Learner Destination Survey”, the terms “Tracer Study 1” and “Tracer Survey 1” or “2006 tracer study” and “2006 tracer survey” are preferred here.

As we can see from this illustration, the Tracer survey 1 sample corresponds to the response profile from the 2005 baseline study – less the (large number of) students who failed to provide usable addresses in their responses in 2005. The Tracer survey 2 sample corresponds to the response profile from the 2006 Tracer survey 1 – preserving the methodological logic of the project and allowing for appropriate weighting of the data back to the total Grade 12 student population of 2005 (504, 322 students).

Case studies

Ten students selected from amongst survey participants in the 2006 and / or 2008 tracer study surveys – five of them students planning on entering the teaching profession, five of them students planning on entering other professions – were interviewed in 2008 to provide qualitative information on a small cross-section of study participants and their life histories up to that point. Data derived from these interviews, which were not analysed as part of the HSRC study, form part of the present study.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

This section outlines the work to be undertaken for this thesis which will make an original contribution to the field of pathway studies into and through HE. It begins with an epistemological account of the methodological approach to be followed and then proceeds to outline the particular methodologies deployed in the analysis of the data collected. This is followed by a sub-section summarising the methodologies deployed, focussing on the statistical methods and the unit of differentiation used, and a sub-section on the limitations of the study. A note on the ethics clearance obtained at the HSRC ahead of the fieldwork phase (2005-2008) concludes the section.

Epistemological account of the methodological approach deployed

The research project that underpins this thesis is broadly situated within a positivist philosophical paradigm, two of the main elements of which are characterised by Hammersley (1995) as:

1. A conception of the nature of science which emphasises method and conceives of this as involving logical argument, the testing of ideas against what is observable, and the rejection as meaningless of claims to knowledge that go beyond what is logically derivable or observable.
2. The idea that science, and rigorous inquiry generally, can only produce factual knowledge, they cannot generate evaluative or prescriptive conclusions (Hammersley, 1995: 7).

The survey-based methodology that underpinned the student pathways study conducted at the HSRC from 2005 to 2008 sought indeed to test ideas against what is observable / measurable; to that extent it was positivist in orientation. Such an approach continues into the present study. The approach deployed does not pretend, however, to total objectivity. While (social) science seeks to describe the world *as it is*, the scientist inevitably comes to *what is* from a particular world view shaped by his / her “reactions, cognitions, and perceptions” (Halliday, 1971: 332). There is unavoidably, then, an element of subjectivity in any research. Nevertheless, the intention in this study is to be as objective as possible in describing observed phenomena *while being fully cognisant of the biases brought by the social scientist to the research process*.

While absolute certainty is not possible, however – so much is evident from my advice to the reader in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 to interpret certain data with caution – this does not mean that any view is likely to be as true as the view I present. In other words, my brand of positivism allows me to say that I am reasonably sure of, or can speculate to a greater or lesser extent about the generalisability of, the findings presented based on the evidence at my disposal.

This meta-theoretical position holds equally in the analysis of qualitative data in the chapters that follow. While some linguists might posit that discourse analysis, in its deployment of tried and tested linguistic conventions, is objective, the very subjectivity that shapes the world view of the analyst must inevitably colour the analysis. This said, I do not differentiate quantitative from qualitative methodology in as stark a way as some might do, precisely because “linguistic criticism” (Fowler, 1986) represents a genuine attempt to analyse discourse using scientific tools.

In the analysis that follows, then, I shall use quantitative and qualitative methods reflexively to depict as accurate a profile as possible of student pathways and of the factors influencing the students who pursue them within the constraints of a world view shaped by my own social and linguistic proclivities.

Cohort analysis

Cosser (2009) and Cosser & Sehlola (2009) analysed the aspirations and destinations of the 2005 cohort of students one year after they were first surveyed. The new study undertaken for this thesis will track students into their destinations in 2008 to ascertain the factors shaping their trajectories.

Methodologies for tracer studies

Student choice behaviour, in the analyses of the 2005 and 2006 data (see the summaries of the findings in Cosser, 2009 and Cosser & Sehlola, 2009 in Chapter 2), was concerned with the process leading up to, and immediately following, the transition from school to HE. The

analysis of the data derived from the 2008 tracer survey and of the pathways of students from school until that point, however, requires a different kind of methodology: one that tracks a cohort of students along their individual pathways over a three-year period (2006-2008).

A key finding from Australian studies (Harris, Rainey & Sumner, 2006) is that individual pathways are not linear but may take various twists and turns, between studying, full or part-time work, and periods of unemployment. And while the passage through a HE institution may be deemed to be more linear than this description suggests, the same complexity may well obtain, especially where programme shifts, work experience, short-term transfers to other programmes, and “periodic nonenrolment” (Beutel & Anderson, 2007: 353) – or *stopouts*, as such periods are also called – are concerned. The challenge is to find a mechanism to measure such complex patterns of transition.

Three broad approaches to investigating student pathways through HE to graduation are possible. The first involves a cross-sectional methodology: surveying students at point x in their university studies – say, in year 1 – and then again at point y – upon graduation. This can only be done for a cohort of students who enrol in the same programme, however, and will yield information only on those who complete the programme in the notional anticipated period of time (say, three years for a general bachelor’s degree, or four years for a professional degree). Such an approach is not particularly useful, then, in tracking students through the system.

The second approach is to model student completion rates using aggregated student data on an annual basis. This is the approach adopted by Shah & Burke (1999), for example, who deploy a Markov chain to model the movement of undergraduates through the HE system in Australia. Using the age of a student when s/he commences a course, they are able to provide estimates of the probability of that student completing the course. The model also provides estimates for the mean time a student takes to complete the course, and the mean time s/he spends in the HE system.

Deployment of the Markov chain involves using two characteristics of a student. These are age at course commencement and year of enrolment in the course. For example, a typical transient state is: being a 20-year-old at course commencement and in the second year of enrolment in the course. Since a single year is used as the period of transition from one state to another, this definition implies that a student can enter a transient state only once and cannot remain in it for more than one period. The two absorbing states of the Markov chain are dropout from course and completion of course. Altogether 51 transient states, as identified by crosses in the matrix in Table 4.1, are included in the model.

Table 4.1: Transient states of the Markov chain model

Age at course commencement	Year of enrolment in course					
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th or higher
Under 18	X					

Age at course commencement	Year of enrolment in course					
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th or higher
18	X	X				
19	X	X	X			
20	X	X	X	X		
21	X	X	X	X	X	
22	X	X	X	X	X	X
23	X	X	X	X	X	X
24	X	X	X	X	X	X
25-29	X	X	X	X	X	X
30-34	X	X	X	X	X	X
Over 34	X	X	X	X	X	X

Source: Shah & Burke (1999: 365)

Note: The combination of the row and column labels of the matrix defines the transient state. States included in the model are indicated by (X).

The combination of the row and column labels of the matrix defines the transient state. The last state in each row has a slightly different interpretation from that of the other states. For example, the last state in the third row is to be interpreted as: being 19 years old at course commencement and in the third or higher year of enrolment.

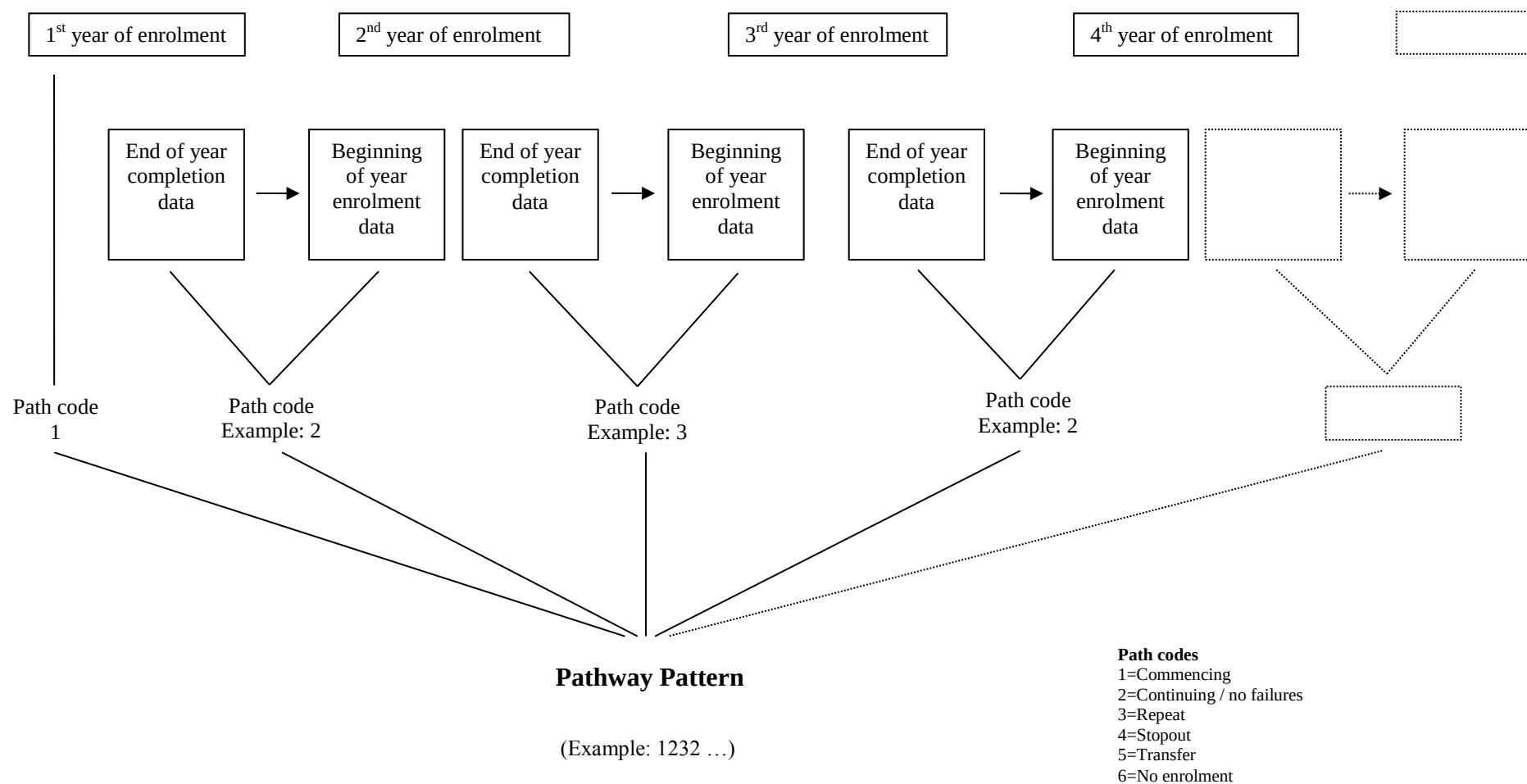
Estimating the transition probabilities clearly relies on data on student flows. Such data may come from cohort analysis, which depends on conducting a longitudinal study. But, claim Shah & Burke, such studies are expensive to conduct and usable data from them are not available for a period of time after commencement of the study. But in cases where longitudinal data are available, as in the present study, one should obviously draw on them in using a model of the kind (Markov chain) Shah & Burke use in their study.

The third approach is to find a way to track individual students, where one has data for them, through their HE to completion / dropout. The seminal text in a consideration of tracking pathways of individual students is Robinson (2004). She shows, through reference to student data from 1994 to 2000 supplied by a large public university to the Australian Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, how a technique for identifying and representing pathways of student progression through a degree course allows one to capture information on both the process and outcomes of student progression.

Figure 4.2 illustrates her model. Students categorised as “commencing” at the beginning of the first year of the course in 1994 formed the base cohort ($n = 72$). A student’s completion status at the end of each year for the total enrolled units of study for that year was coded into four categories: all enrolled units of study completed; all enrolled units of study not completed; changed enrolment or transferred to another degree course within the university; and no enrolment in any unit of study.

Completion data at the end of an academic year determined a student’s status at the beginning of the following year. If records indicated that the student had re-enrolled at the university but

in a different degree course, the student was recorded as a “transfer” for that year. If records indicated that the student had not re-enrolled at the university then the student was recorded as “no enrolment” for that year. Status at the beginning of each year was coded as:
commencing course – applicable to enrolments in the first year of the study (1994) only;
continuing with no failures from previous year of enrolment; repeat of some or all units from previous year of enrolment; or no enrolment recorded.



Source: Robinson (2004)

Figure 4.2: Identification of pathway patterns from unit of study enrolment and completion data

Information from indicators of enrolment and completion status at the beginning of the year and the end of the previous year were amalgamated into six categories: (1) commencing student (first year of enrolment only); (2) continuing with no repeats; (3) unit of study repeat/s following failure; (4) stopout (temporary); (5) transfer (enrolment in another degree course at the same university); or (6) no enrolment at the university.

These categories were used to categorise enrolment and completion status for each student. All students in the base cohort in 1994 were “commencing course” in the first year and given the coding of 1. In subsequent years, if a student had transferred to another course within the university, s/he was coded 5 for that year. A student was coded as 3 if s/he had failed a unit in the previous year. Stopouts were initially recorded as “temporary”. The analysis was continued for two more years to further distinguish between temporary “stopout” and permanent “dropout” or withdrawal at that point in time. Stopouts were recorded as “no enrolment” if the student had not returned by the end of 2000. Some of these could be re-classified as “temporary” if the study was further extended. At the end of the minimum course completion period of five years, each student had been assigned a code for each successive year following commencement, each code indicating a stage in his / her course progression and enrolment status for that year.

Each student’s enrolment status over the five previous calendar years was represented by a series of codes. For each student, the pattern of five digits represents his / her pathway of course progression. As an example, the course pathway of a student classified as a “commencing” student in his / her first year, satisfactorily completing each of the subsequent three years and enrolled in the fifth year, would be indicated initially by the code series 1,2,2,2,2. These codes Robinson then concatenated into the pattern ‘12222’. If the final year of enrolment was successful, this student would have completed, in 5 years, the minimum time taken to do the course. A pathway pattern of ‘12252’ indicates a student commenced in first year, continued in Year 2 and Year 3, transferred to another course within the university in Year 4 and returned to enrol back in the original course in his / her fifth year of enrolment. This student would not have completed in the minimum time. However, the student might possibly have completed another one-year course in the fourth year of enrolment, the “transfer” year.

Table 4.2 exemplifies Robinson’s capturing of student progression patterns.

Table 4.2: Course progression pathway patterns and descriptions

Pathway pattern ^a	No repeats, stop-outs, transfers, dropouts	Repeats of units of study	Temporary stopout	Transfer	Dropout
12222	*****				
12225				*****	
12232		*****			
12242			*****		

Pathway pattern ^a	No repeats, stop-outs, transfers, dropouts	Repeats of units of study	Temporary stopout	Transfer	Dropout
12252				*****	
12322		*****			
12323		*****			
12432		*****	*****		
13222		*****			
12226					*****
12256				*****	*****
12266					*****
12666					*****
13666		*****			*****
16666					*****

^a Pathway pattern codes: 1 = Commencing, 2 = Continuing / no failures, 3 = repeat, 4 = stopout, 5 = transfer, 6 = no enrolment

Source: Robinson (2004)

As Robinson indicates, the coding of “transfer” pathways in her model refers to only those students leaving a course and enrolling in other courses *within* the university; those students changing their course and transferring to *another* university are not accommodated. In such cases, she proposes replacing code 6 in Table 4.2, which refers to students switching to another university, with code 9. Those students whose pathway is coded as 9 could then be included in any subsequent analysis of progression and performance within the second institution; such students would have two pathways, one for each university.

Since the present thesis will consider the mobility of students not only within an institution but across the entire HE system in South Africa, such a modification would need to be made for the study reported on here.

As Robison (2004) indicates, the model can be adapted to any situation in which the tracking of students is required. So, for example, Wildschut, Kruss, Janse van Rensburg, Haupt & Visser (2012) modify the model to track apprenticeship students in South Africa, as illustrated in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Possible trajectories into the apprenticeship system

1	2	3	4	5	6	N	%	1	2	3	4	5	6	N	%
W	A					316	21.3	S	A					345	22.3
W	S	A				51	3.4	S	W	A				333	22.5
W	S	W	A			20	1.3	S	U	A				52	3.5
W	U	A				14	0.9	S	W	U	A			22	1.5
W	B	A				13	0.9	S	U	W	A			16	1.1
W	U	W	A			5	0.3	S	W	S	A			12	0.8
W	U	S	A			4	0.3	S	U	S	A			11	0.7
W	B	W	A			3	0.2	S	B	A				9	0.6

1	2	3	4	5	6	N	%	1	2	3	4	5	6	N	%
W	S	B	A			2	0.1	S	B	W	A			7	0.5
W	S	W	U	A		2	0.1	S	W	S	W	A		5	0.3
W	U	W				1	0.1	S	W					2	0.1
W	A	S	A			1	0.1	S	W	U	S	A		2	0.1
W	U	B	A			1	0.1	S	W	B	A			2	0.1
W	S	U	W	A		1	0.1	S	A	W	A			1	0.1
W	S	W	S	A		1	0.1	S	U	S	U	A		1	0.1
W	U	W	S	A		1	0.1	S	A	U	A			1	0.1
Subtotal						436	29.4	S	U	B	A			1	0.1
U	A					33	2.2	S	U	S	W	A		1	0.1
U	W	A				39	2.6	S	W	U	W	A		1	0.1
U	S	A				27	1.8	S	U	W	S	W	A	1	0.1
U	S	W	A			18	1.2	S	W	S	W	S	A	1	0.1
U	W	S	A			7	0.5	Subtotal						826	55.7
U	W	S	W	A		3	0.2	B	A					12	0.8
U	S	U	A			2	0.1	B	W	A				4	0.3
U	W	U	A			2	0.1	B	W					1	0.1
U	B	A				1	0.1	B	U	A				1	0.1
U	W	B	A			1	0.1	B	S	W	A			1	0.1
U	S	A	U	A		1	0.1	B	W	U	A			1	0.1
U	S	U	S	A		1	0.1	B	S	W	U	A		1	0.1
U	S	U	W	A		1	0.1	Subtotal						21	1.4
U	S	W	S	A		1	0.1	A						58	3.9
U	W	B	W	A		1	0.1	A	W	A				3	0.2
U	W	U	W	A		1	0.1	Subtotal						61	4.1
Subtotal						139	9.4	Total						1483	100.0

*W-Working *U-Unemployed *S-Studied *B-Both Worked and Studied *A-Apprenticeship

Source: Wildschut et al. (2012: 24)

The authors are able to draw a number of conclusions from this table, first and foremost that only 4.1 per cent of the total sample entered an apprenticeship directly after school (A) – fewer than one hundred individuals – and that apprenticeship is consequently not a career option of choice for school leavers (Wildschut et al. 2012).

This review has shown the importance of deploying a model for tracking student pathways that can accommodate the variety of trajectories followed. The development and application of a model to illustrate student pathways through the HE system will be undertaken in Chapter 6.

Case study analysis

The 2005-2008 student pathways study identified, from the 2005 and / or 2006 and / or 2008 surveys, ten students enrolled in universities in Gauteng Province to participate in qualitative research on the factors influencing them to enrol or not to enrol in teacher education programmes – the objective being for the research team to understand more clearly the constraints to recruitment of students into teacher education programmes and ultimately into

the teaching profession. The case studies probed students' study and career pathways from their own perspectives and in their real-life contexts.

The selection of students who formed part of the case studies was both random and purposeful: random, in that an attempt was made to create a database of enrolments in teacher education programmes and enrolments in programmes in other disciplines and to randomly select from this database ten students (five enrolled at some point in their learning pathways in a teacher education programme and five enrolled in programmes in other disciplines); purposeful, in that substitutions had to be made to arrive at a mix of students who represented an appropriate demographic profile by programme, race and gender. The sampling process issued in two white students and eight black African students being included in the selection. Six of the participants were female. Four of the ten students had enrolled in a teacher education programme.¹¹

The interviews were semi-structured, comprising an interview schedule and spontaneous questions. The interviews were tape recorded and subsequently transcribed. Field notes were also taken during interviews. This dual recording process maximised the validity and accuracy of the data collected, ensuring that important information would not be lost. The data were collected over a period of ten days.

Interview questions were grouped into eleven categories:

1. Student pathways
2. Enrolment in teacher education / other programme area
3. The role of school learning in choosing teacher education / other programme area
4. Future enrolment in teacher education
5. Career direction
6. Factors influencing career choice
7. Choosing between making money and making a difference
8. Teacher education in South Africa
9. The role of teachers in society
10. The role of bursaries in teacher education; and
11. Student contribution to society.

The interview schedule was broadly concerned with students' programme and career choices, and with their views of the teaching profession. The schedule is reproduced in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Interview schedule for case studies of ten students, 2008

Question #	Question
1	Please tell us a bit about yourself and describe your learning pathway so far.
2	Why did you decide to enrol / not to enrol in a teacher education programme?
3	To what extent did your experience of being taught at school influence your decision to enrol /

¹¹ The original intention, because of the teacher education orientation of the study, was to find five Education students and five students enrolled in other programme areas; but only four Education students in Gauteng could be found.

Question #	Question
	not to enrol in a teacher education programme?
4	Are you planning on enrolling in a teacher education programme at some future point? Why / why not?
5	In which career direction are your studies leading you?
6	What factors have influenced you most in choosing your intended career? a. Individual factors (e.g., gender) b. Institutional factors (e.g., school) c. Social factors (e.g., community) d. Financial factors (e.g., financial prospects attached to a particular career)
7	Which is more important, and why: making money; or making a difference in people's lives? Please elaborate.
8	What is your opinion of the teaching profession in South Africa in 2008?
9	What role should teachers play in society?
10	How do you think the introduction of a bursary scheme for students wanting to study teacher education will influence learners in their decision-making?
11	What contribution do you hope to make to society over the next ten years?

Source: Author

While five of the eleven interview questions concern decision-making with regard to enrolment in Education programmes and to perceptions of the teaching profession, the analysis in subsequent chapters focuses on programme and career choices and the ways in which the interviewees viewed their past and future trajectories. The analysis does not, moreover, consider the responses of the ten students to each of these questions in turn. Rather, it takes a thematic approach, identifying the key themes that emerge from the responses of the students and grouping them into topics.

General observations on the interviews

The interviews were conducted between 1 and 15 October 2008, ranging in length from forty-five minutes to two-and-a-half hours each. The length of each interview was determined entirely by the interviewee's proclivity to talk, a function largely of personality type and her / his level of comfortableness with the interviewers.¹² Most interviews were conducted on university campuses, the remainder in coffee shops. In both cases the interviewers made every effort to draw the interviewees out as far as possible.

All ten interviews were, with the permission of the interviewees, tape recorded and then transcribed for future reference. In addition to recording the interviews, the author took hand-written notes, attempting as far as possible to capture the actual words of interviewees. Hand-written notes ranged from three to twelve A4 pages in length, the average length being five pages. The analysis below is based predominantly on these hand-written notes – except for the analysis of students' world-views, which is based on the transcriptions.

¹² The interviews were conducted by the author and by Sekinah Sehlola, a research intern at the HSRC in 2008.

From a demographic perspective, four of the students interviewed were black African males, four black African females, and two white females. It would have been impossible in such a small selection to have included representative numbers of male and female students from all four of the major race groups (black African, coloured, Indian / Asian, and white)¹³ in the general population. There are no Indian / Asian or coloured students in the selection, for example. The primary aim of the selection process was not, however, demographic representation.

Given budgetary constraints and the desire for face-to-face interviews, students were selected only from HE institutions in Gauteng Province. Six of the students had at some point been enrolled at universities, three at universities of technology, and one at a comprehensive university.

All students were asked the same questions, further probing depending on the responses provided by interviewees.

Analysis of the ten case studies complements the quantitative and statistical analysis of the data derived from the three surveys. Because the interviewees were themselves participants in the survey process, their accounts of their trajectories from school to HE and into their study programmes epitomise some of the key issues confronting students as they make the transition from secondary to, and through, tertiary education.

The case study data are analysed in two ways: thematically; and stylistically. From a thematic perspective, the analysis identifies and elaborates themes adumbrated in the survey data and themes common across the ten transcripts. From a stylistic perspective, textual analysis is deployed to elucidate the nuances of interviewees' responses to the questions posed to them. The approach of Roger Fowler (in particular, Fowler, 1986 – a cumulative exposition of his approach towards discourse that builds upon his earlier works: Fowler, 1975; Fowler, Hodge, Kress, & Trew, 1979; and Fowler, 1981) is followed. Through a study, inter alia, of syntax, semantics, and world view and of the relationships between and among them, Fowler (1986) constructs a powerful methodology for the interpretation of literary texts – an approach suited equally well to the analysis of interview transcriptions.

Framework for case study analysis

The responses of the ten interviewees to the eleven questions contained in the interview schedule can be classified under the four rubrics contained in the diagrammatic representation in Figure 4.3: Home; Schooling; HE & career; and – overarching all of these – Individual characteristics. These are not perfectly discrete categories; but they serve as a way of framing the analysis.

¹³ These are the official Statistics South Africa terms for the four “population groups”.

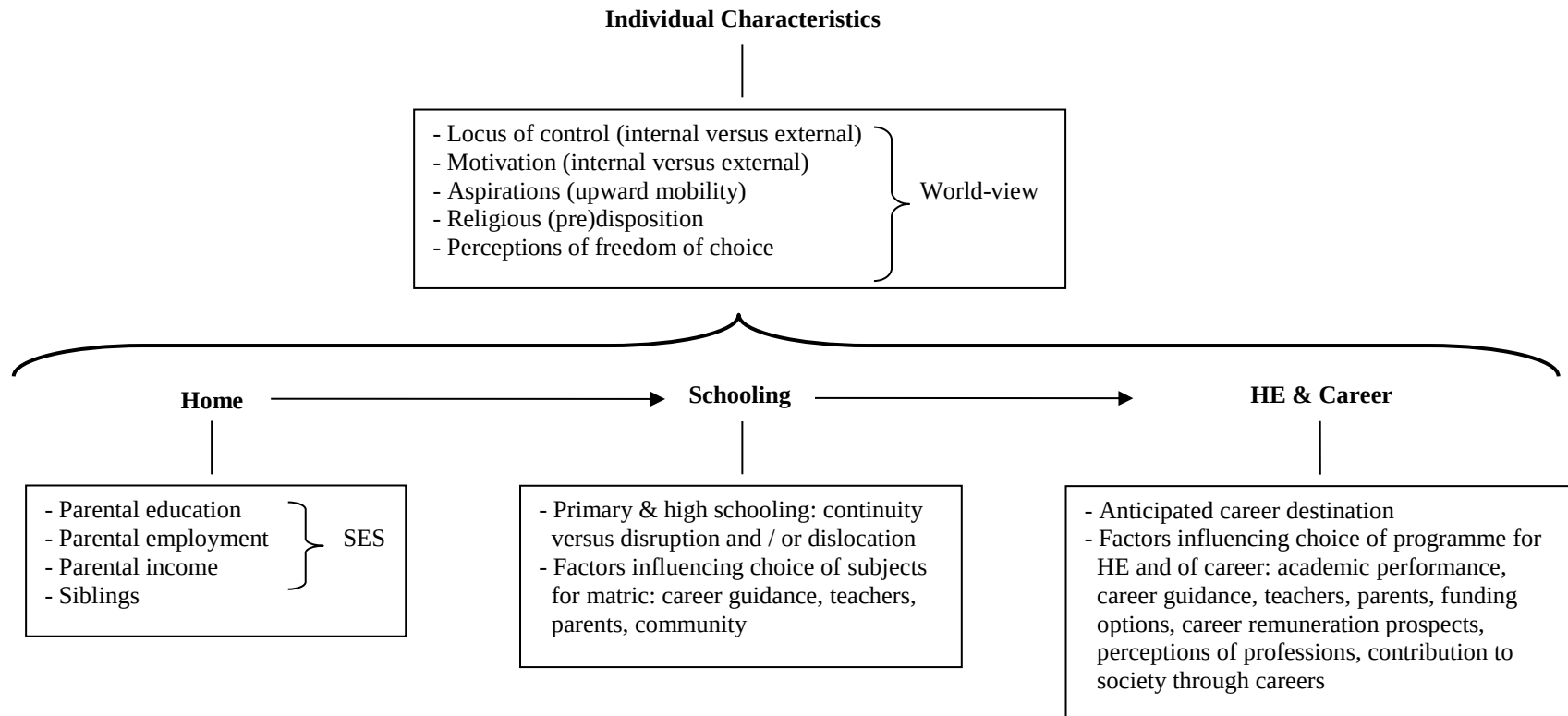


Figure 4.3: Themes emerging from interviews with ten students

This framework enables us to analyse the home and schooling backgrounds of the ten students.

Home

“Home is where one starts from,” T.S. Eliot tells us in *East Coker*, one of his *Four Quartets* (Eliot, 1940: V). Axiomatically, parental influence, whether direct or indirect, is one of the strongest influences on children. Parental genes predispose children to behave in certain ways in response to external stimuli, and parental education, employment, and income determine children’s SES and shape the way they see the world – linking “Home” to “Individual characteristics” in the schema in Figure 4.3.

The composition of the family – whether a child has grown up with two parents and how many siblings there are – is one of the earliest determinants of her / his frame of reference and world view. Table 4.5 provides a brief vignette of each of the ten families from which the interviewees come.

Table 4.5: Family composition of the ten interviewees¹⁴

FAMILY VIGNETTES
Sarie lives with both parents, both of whom have a matric only. Both parents lost their jobs when she was in Grade 7; her father now works for a car rental company, her mother for a pharmaceutical company, as a book-keeper. Sarie is the younger of two sisters. She is a low-SES student.
Marope lives with both parents. Both have a degree in commerce. Marope is the third of four children. She is a high-SES student.
Matsephe lives with both parents. Her father has a matric, her mother a Grade 10 certificate. Only her father works; he has a part-time job. Matsephe is the youngest of four children. She is a low-SES student.
Lindiwe lives with both parents, both of whom have a Grade 10 certificate only. Her father works for a gas company, her mother as a seamstress. Lindiwe is the youngest of three girls. She is a low-SES student.
Amos lives with both parents, both of whom are unemployed and live off social grants. His father, who is 69 years old, was retrenched by a farmer several years ago. Amos is the fifth of six children; his oldest sibling is 54, his youngest sibling disabled. Amos is a low-SES student.
Ruth lived with both parents until she was in Grade 7, when they divorced. Her father had a degree in Engineering (he is now deceased), while her mother has a college diploma in child care. Her father’s multiple sclerosis played a part in the divorce; since he could no longer work, her mother (who had to become the breadwinner) raised her. Ruth is the oldest of four children. She is a middle-SES student.
Lerato lives with her mother, a Grade R teacher. Most of her relatives and friends are teachers. Lerato is the third of four children. She is a high-SES student.
Siphiwe lived with both parents until he was in Grade 7, when they divorced. He now lives with his mother, who is a seamstress. Siphiwe is the fourth of six children. He is a low-SES student.
Moeketsi lives with his father, who has raised him since his parents’ divorce. Moeketsi is the older of two brothers. He is a high-SES student.
Tsephe lives with his aunt, a machine operator in a factory. His mother is unemployed, and his father is absent from his life. Both his parents have a matric only. Tsephe is the oldest of four children. He is a low-SES student.

Source: Author

From these vignettes we can make the following observations:

¹⁴ Names and place-names have been changed to protect the identities of the interviewees.

1. Five of the ten interviewees live with both parents, three live with a mother, one with a father, and one with an aunt. Four of the interviewees have lived through a parental divorce, and three of them live with their mothers. Two of the four sets of parents who divorced did so when their interviewee children were in Grade 7, on the cusp of puberty and the physiological and emotional changes which that rite of passage entails.
2. A total of 39 children were born into the ten families – an average of nearly four per family. Two of the interviewees come from a family of six children, five from a family of four, one from a family of three, and two from a family of two.
3. In only one of the ten families (Marope's) is there a double income from two degreed parents. There is only one other family (Ruth's) where a parent had a degree. Eight of the ten interviewees are therefore first-generation HE students. At the other end of the socio-economic spectrum (Amos's family), there is no income besides a social grant. Between these two extremes are eight families where there is a single income. Remarkably, all ten families have at least one child (one of the ten interviewees) who was enrolled in a HE institution, at some point and for however long, between 2006 and 2008. The interview information on parental / guardian education levels and income squares for the most part with the SES status of the interviewees based on the formula for SES calculation above. The SES of six of the interviewees is low, that of one is middle, and that of three high.
4. Two of the interviewees are the youngest of their siblings, two are the oldest, one is the younger, and one is the older. Four of the interviewees are placed somewhere between the oldest and youngest of a family of four or six.

Schooling

Table 4.6 indicates the types of primary and high school that interviewees attended.

Table 4.6: Primary and high schooling of the ten interviewees

SCHOOLING VIGNETTES	
Sarie	attended former Model C primary and high schools in a suburb.
Marope	attended a former Model C primary school, two different state high schools in the US during her Grade 8 year (one in Massachusetts, the other in Virginia), and a former Model C high school.
Matsephe	attended primary and high school in a township.
Lindiwe	attended primary and high school in a township.
Amos	attended primary and high school in a township.
Ruth	attended a former Model C primary school for her Grade 1 and 2 years, an independent high-fee primary school for Grades 3 to 7, and a former Model C high school in a suburb.
Lerato	attended a former Model C primary school, a former House of Representatives (coloured) high school for Grades 8 to 10, and a former Model C high school for Grades 11 and 12.
Siphiwe	attended primary and high school in a township.
Moeketsi	attended primary, middle, and high school in a township.
Tsephe	attended primary and high school in a township.

Source: Author

Six of the ten interviewees attended township schools (whether former Department of Education and Training or “new” schools is unknown), the remainder predominantly former Model C schools. The schools interviewees attended correspond for the most part with the interviewees' SES, low

SES being associated with township schooling, high SES with suburban schooling. The exceptions are Sarie, who though from a low socio-economic background had all her schooling in the suburbs, and Moeketsi, who though from a high socio-economic background had all his schooling in a township.

The school choices of interviewees vary, predictably according to whether the schools they attended were in the townships or the suburbs. Matsephe, who attended township schools, wanted to go to a former Model C school in Pretoria, but her parents could not afford the school fees. The school she went to, formerly for disabled students, was “inexpensive and near [her] home” (*Interview with Matsephe, 2 October 2008*). Matsephe’s resignation in having to go to a township rather than a suburban high school bespeaks an unquestioning acceptance of a status quo that is very different from that of interviewees who attended former model C schools.

In contrast to Matsephe, Ruth went to an established former Model C primary school in a suburb, where she was joined by her younger sister two years later. Since her younger sister “was too clever for the grade [Grade 0] – more advanced in her reading” (*Interview with Ruth, 15 October 2008*), both girls moved to an independent school for the remainder of their primary education. “It was a fantastic school – huge opportunity – gave me a fantastic foundation.” For Ruth, there was also a choice of high schools: one of two co-education schools, or a single-sex school – all in the suburbs. Her mother gave her “free choice”; Ruth chose the single-sex school, and later commended the option to her youngest sister:

I spoke of the advantages of being in an all-girls’ school – there’s a freedom to be who you want to be; you avoid the competition between boys and girls.... I would send my daughters to a single-sex high school (*Interview with Ruth, 15 October 2008*).

SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGIES DEPLOYED IN THE STUDY

Chapter 1 has outlined the general flow of chapters in this study. From a methodological perspective, the three chapters in which the data are presented proceed as follows.

Chapter 5 summarises the findings on the data collected from the baseline (2005) and tracer study 1 (2006) surveys presented in the author’s earlier work on the HSRC project (Cosser, 2009; Cosser & Sehlola, 2009). This summary is followed by an analysis of the HE enrolment destinations in 2006 of the students in the 2005 sample.

Chapter 6 focuses on student progression through HE between 2006 and 2010, using the tracer study 1 (2006) and tracer study 2 (2008) survey data to compare students’ programme enrolment destinations in relation to their initial aspirations and programme preferences while they were still at school (as collected through the baseline survey). The chapter draws also on the responses to an open-ended question in tracer survey 2 concerning the reasons for students’ stated ability to exercise choice in their current situations. Further qualitative data – derived from the case study interviews described above – are analysed in order to exemplify individual student trajectories through school into, through and out of HE.

Beyond the analysis of tracer study 1-, tracer study 2- and case study data, a major part of Chapter 6 is devoted to the development of a model for tracking student progression through the HE system (the model based on the work of Robinson, 2004, outlined above) and to:

- The derivation, from that model and from the ten-pathway typology presented in Chapter 3, of a nine-pathway typology illustrating the three key parameters (timing of entry to HE, continuity of study through HE, and completion of a programme of study) of student progression into and through HE; and
- The population of this model and this typology with data from tracer study 1, tracer study 2, and the erstwhile Department of Education's Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS).

Chapter 7 explores the imagined trajectories of the class of 2005 beyond HE, drawing on data from the 2006 and 2008 tracer surveys to investigate students' aspirations for entering different professions and their views about future work and life in South Africa.

STATISTICAL METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

The study that follows deploys descriptive statistics to investigate the differences between low- and high-SES student pathways into and through HE. The basic technique of cross-tabulation is used to differentiate low- from high-SES students. The statistical package deployed in the analysis of all statistical data was SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). While inferential statistical analyses were used by Cosser with Du Toit (2002) and Cosser with Du Toit & Visser (2004) in ascertaining such information as the odds of students proceeding to HE and the most significant factors affecting choice of institution and programme of study in the precursor (2001-2002) to the 2005-2008 HSRC study, there has been no need to deploy such techniques as regression and CHAID in considering the differential pathways of low- and high-SES students.

The methodological approach deployed in this study depends, to a large extent, on the interplay between quantitative and qualitative data, analysis of the latter teasing out some of the trends identified through analysis of the former and that which is teased out subsequently itself being subjected to quantitative analysis. As, in relief, figures are projected from a flat canvas, this reciprocity illustrates how the bigger picture is instantiated in a number of smaller pictures and how these smaller pictures in turn illuminate the whole.

UNIT OF DIFFERENTIATION IN THE STUDY

While race, alongside gender, was the main differentiating variable deployed in earlier work on student choice behaviour at the HSRC (Cosser with Du Toit, 2002; Cosser with Du Toit & Visser, 2004; Cosser, 2009; Cosser & Sehlola, 2009), the emphasis shifts in this study to socio-economic status (SES) as the key unit of differentiation in the pathways of students.

The SES of students was determined through the establishment of an SES indicator based upon responses to two of the questions posed both in the baseline survey and in both tracer surveys:¹⁵

- What is the highest level of education of each of your parents / guardians (where applicable)?
- Approximately how much do your parents / guardians earn per month before deductions (where applicable)?

The levels of education and income levels of both parents / guardians, where applicable, are taken into account in the calculation. The SES variable is calculated using four variables from the survey databases:

- Education level of the father / male guardian
- Education level of the mother / female guardian
- Income level of the father / male guardian; and
- Income level of the mother / female guardian.

Categories within these variables are re-categorised into three categories of an inherent order to form ordinal variables for each – that is, variables with categories for “low”, “middle” and “high”. Table 4.7 shows how categories for the education and income variables are re-categorised into an ordinal variable.

Table 4.7: Categorization of parental / guardian education and income variables into an ordinal variable

Education	Income	Ordinal Variable	Value (Score)
No formal education	No income	Low	1
Some primary schooling	R 1 – R 400		
Grade 7	R 401 – R 800		
Some secondary schooling	R 801 – R 1 600		
Matric / Grade 12	R 1 601 – R 3 200	Middle	2
Technical college certificate	R 3 201 – R 6 400		
	R 6 401 – R 12 800		
Technikon certificate or diploma	R 12 801 – R 25 600	High	3
University certificate or diploma	R 25 601 – R 51 200		
Technikon degree	R 51 201 – R 102 400		
University degree	R 102 400 – 204 800		
	R 204 801 or more		

Source: Cosser with Du Toit (2002)

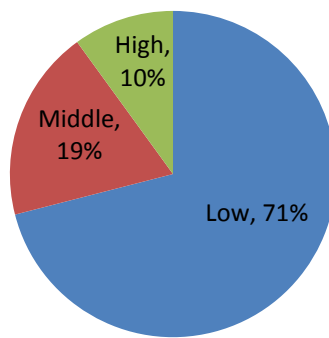
The four new ordinal variables for each of the re-categorised variables are then used to calculate a single SES variable that assigns an SES score to each student in the database. The SES variable is simply based on the average score of the four ordinal variables and is calculated using the following formula:

¹⁵ Questions 8.10 and 8.12 in the baseline survey (Appendix 4), K.3 and K.5 in tracer survey 1 (Appendix 5), and H.3 and H.5 in tracer survey 2 (Appendix 6).

$$SES = \frac{\left(\frac{\sum Education}{Father-Mother} \right) + \left(\frac{\sum Income}{Father-Mother} \right)}{4}$$

Scores within the calculated SES variable range from 1 – 3, where scores ranging between 1 and 1.6666666 are coded to form “Low socio-economic status”, scores between 1.6666667 and 2.3333333 are coded to form “Middle socio-economic status”, and scores between 2.3333334 and 3 are coded to form “High socio-economic status”.

The resulting SES profile of Grade 12 students in 2005 is depicted in Figure 4.4.



Source: Cosser (2009)

Figure 4.4: SES of Grade 12 students, 2005

While one can plot SES on its own, moreover, it is also possible, as Table 4.8 indicates, to cross-tabulate the SES indicator with race.

Table 4.8: Cross-tabulation of race with socio-economic status, 2005 (numbers are weighted)

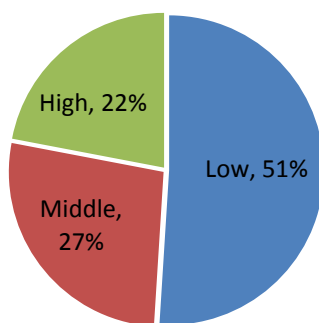
Race group		Socio economic status (SES)			
		Low	Middle	High	Total
Black African	Number	284,493	57,626	29,586	371 705
	Row %	76.5%	15.5%	8.0%	100.0%
	Column %	88.8%	68.5%	63.9%	82.4%
Coloured	Number	21,946	7,542	3,235	32 723
	Row %	67.1%	23.0%	9.9%	100.0%
	Column %	6.8%	9.0%	7.0%	7.3%
Indian / Asian	Number	8,720	5,771	1,902	16 393
	Row %	53.2%	35.2%	11.6%	100.0%
	Column %	2.7%	6.9%	4.1%	3.6%
White	Number	4,442	12,859	11,434	28 735
	Row %	15.5%	44.8%	39.8%	100.0%
	Column %	1.4%	15.3%	24.7%	6.4%
Other	Number	863	305	162	1 330
	Row %	64.9%	22.9%	12.2%	100.0%

Race group		Socio economic status (SES)			
		Low	Middle	High	Total
	Column %	.3%	.4%	.3%	.3%
Total	Number	320,464	84,103	46,319	450 886
	Row %	71.1%	18.7%	10.3%	100.0%
	Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Cosser (2009)

As we see from this table, while 77 per cent of black African students in 2005 fell within the low SES category and 8 per cent the high SES category, the distribution amongst white students was quite different: 40 per cent of students came from a high SES background, while 16 per cent came from a low SES background. Coloured and Indian /Asian students fell between these two extremes. Nevertheless, the profile reveals a shift over a ten-year period since the inception of democracy, pointing up the inappropriateness of persisting with race as the key differentiating variable. Given that impecunity is a key barrier to HE access in South Africa, SES, a function in in part of parental income, is therefore preferred as the variable that distinguishes students from one another.

While the SES distribution of Grade 12 students in 2005 was 71 per cent low-SES : 19 percent middle-SES : 10 per cent high-SES, an analysis of the sample who entered HE in 2006 whose student ID numbers enabled the research team to identify them within the Department of Education's Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) revealed a distribution far less skewed towards low SES, as Figure 4.5 shows.

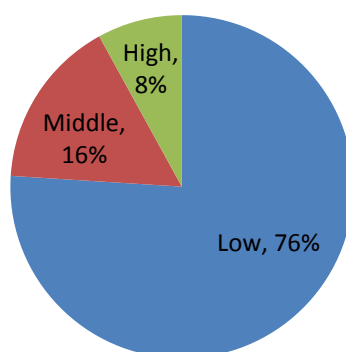


Source: Author

Figure 4.5: Socio-economic status distribution of tracer study 1-HEMIS-linked higher education students, 2006

The percentage of low-SES students in HE, the figure shows, was considerable lower than that of the total response profile in 2005 (71 per cent).

In 2008, the percentage distribution of low : middle : high SES HE students was as follows:



Source: Author

Figure 4.6: Socio-economic status distribution of tracer study 2 higher education students, 2008

The difference between the 2006 and 2008 distributions does not reflect any major shift in SES profile in the actual population, however. The 2008 distribution is a function of the tracer study 2 response profile. The SES distributions of students in the three years – 2005, 2006 and 2008 – are indicated merely to illustrate the SES distributions used in the calculations underpinning the analyses in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The three main methodological limitations of the study are the following.

The first limitation, which serves also as a caution, is that the findings are not generalisable to the entire population of students who entered and progressed through HE between 2006 and 2010. Statistical probability diminishes from the time the horses leave the starting gates. From the sample frame for the 2005 survey (58, 965 Grade 12 students), through the response profile to that survey (20,659), the sample frame for the 2006 survey (17,642, which is 20,659 less those students who did not provide addresses in response to the 2005 survey), the response profile to the 2006 survey (4,278, of whom 884 were enrolled in a HE institution), to the response profile to the 2008 survey (920, of whom 159 were enrolled in a HE institution) we see the law of diminishing returns. Even were we to weight the number of students enrolled in HE in 2008 back to the original sample, the number of students enrolled in HE institutions is so small that the picture would be distorted.

While hard and fast generalisations are not possible, however, the study shows that trends are identifiable – trends which further such studies could validate. Indeed, far from seeking to make a case for the generalisability of the findings, the present study seeks to draw from the analysed data certain inferences about the likelihood of the findings being true for a larger body of HE students than that actually examined through the study. The interplay between the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study outlined above is a key element in this endeavour.

Second, disaggregation of the data is clearly less reliable the smaller the data set. So, for example, the results of SES disaggregations undertaken in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 below are purely

indicative and should be treated with some caution. Once again, broad trends are suggested which further research could confirm.

Third, notwithstanding the development of a five-year model in Chapter 6, the study period is short as panel study periods go. A longitudinal study of the kind outlined in Chapter 1 – the US study begun in 1988 which tracked students over an extended period – is clearly desirable in the South African context. Such a study would provide a more nuanced profile of student pathways from and through school and into HE and therefore a more holistic account of the factors affecting student progression through and performance in HE. A proposal for such a study is made in Chapter 9.

ETHICS CLEARANCE FOR THE RESEARCH

All HSRC research is subject to ethics clearance. A proposal for such clearance, together with supporting documentation (the research protocol as well as student consent and assent forms), was submitted to the HSRC Research Ethics Committee – then chaired by Prof Peter Cleaton-Jones, who was active in the WITS Research Ethics Committee – for consideration ahead of the fieldwork in 2005. Full ethics clearance was granted for the study.

CHAPTER 5 – TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO HIGHER EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

This thesis seeks to understand whether students from low socio-economic backgrounds have been able to proceed from school into and through higher education (HE) and to achieve their desired outcomes – completion of a first qualification – with the facility that their counterparts from high socio-economic backgrounds have been able to do. This statement assumes that students from high socio-economic backgrounds have indeed been able to move with ease into and through the HE system, which may or may not be the case. Since the focus of this thesis is not on high-SES student outcomes, however, but on the extent to which the HE system has facilitated low-SES student mobility and progression in relation to that of high-SES students, the question of whether high-SES or indeed *all* students have moved with ease through the system is moot. The study, indeed, is quintessentially comparative in nature.

The key elements of student progression from school into and through HE are adumbrated above. There are three elements, or more accurately, phases:

1. The transition phase – enrolment in HE and the extent to which students' aspirations and preferences are realised in their first year of study
2. The progression phase – passage through HE and whether such passage issues in programme completion and therefore qualification; and
3. The post-HE aspiration phase – student aspiration for the future, as measured by professional aspirations (that is, aspirations to enter particular professions after qualification), and students' expectations about the type of society in which they will live and work.

This and the next two chapters consider the pathways of students through these three phases, the present chapter focusing on the first phase.

The work on the aspirations of Grade 12 students in 2005 to proceed to HE and their enrolment choices in HE institutions in 2006 undertaken by the author as part of the HSRC Student pathways project between 2005 and 2009 (see Cosser, 2009 and Cosser & Sehlola, 2009) suffered from a key limitation: a disconnection between aspiration and enrolment. While the study did ascertain which students who participated in the 2005 school-based survey enrolled in a HE institution in 2006, the analysis was conducted at the systemic level: the authors did not track individual students from Grade 12 into their enrolment destinations in 2006 to ascertain the match between their programme preferences and their programme enrolments. The present chapter establishes this connection.

A further key difference between the earlier work on the student pathways project and the analysis that follows is the disaggregating variable used to distinguish one category of student from another. In the previous work, that variable was race; in the present study, it is SES. So while there remained a fairly strong correlation between race and SES in 2005, as demonstrated in the previous chapter – black African and coloured corresponding most strongly with low-SES, Indian / Asian and white

corresponding most strongly with middle- and high-SES – the present study intends no direct comparison between race and SES. For the purposes of this thesis, then, beginning with the analysis immediately following, our interest lies purely in the impact of SES on student pathways and on the students who follow them.

TRANSLATION OF INDIVIDUAL STUDENT PROGRAMME PREFERENCE INTO ENROLMENT

Table 5.1 outlines the programme area preferences of those students who, in the language of Morrow (1993), gained formal access to HE institutions in 2006. This is important for the narrative that follows: our interest is not merely in what the survey respondents in 2005 claimed to be their preferences and what the 2006 survey respondents indicated were their areas of programme enrolment but in the 2006 enrolment profile *in relation to* the programme preferences of those enrolled. Table 5.1 therefore sets up the tracking of student pathways through the HE system to be explored in Chapter 6.

Table 5.1: Programme area preferences for HE study of Grade 12 students in 2005 who entered HE in 2006, by SES

Programme area	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Natural & mathematical sciences	46	9.0	19	8.0	9	4.5	74	7.8
Engineering & other applied sciences	78	15.2	24	10.0	37	18.6	139	14.6
Health Sciences	35	6.8	27	11.3	29	14.7	91	9.6
Business / commerce	93	18.2	51	21.3	44	22.1	188	19.8
Education	4	0.8	4	1.7	2	1.0	10	1.1
Social sciences & applied humanities	29	5.7	16	6.7	20	10.1	65	6.8
Humanities	10	2.0	8	3.3	7	3.5	25	2.6
Not indicated or available	216	42.3	90	37.7	51	25.6	357	37.6
Total	511	100.0	239	100.0	199	100.0	949	100.0

Source: Author

The category “Not indicated or available” in the table comprises those students who indicated in the 2005 survey that they did not intend proceeding to HE as well as those who indicated that they were intending to proceed to HE but who did not indicate a programme preference for HE. The fact that this is the largest category by some way (38 per cent of the response profile) is a function of the disparity between HE aspiration and enrolment that I shall elaborate upon below. The fact that the percentage of low- and middle-SES students for whom there are no programme area preference data is progressively higher than the percentage of high-SES students for whom there are no data (42 per cent for low-SES students versus 38 per cent versus 26 per cent) suggests that there is a much higher degree of HE programme availability knowledge and / or clarity of preference as well as of question response among high- than among middle- and low-SES students.

Whereas the most popular programme area preference among Grade 12 students in 2005 who did not necessarily go on to enrol in HE in 2006 was Engineering & other applied sciences (23.0 per cent) – by however small a margin – followed by Business / commerce (22.6 per cent) and Natural & mathematical sciences (21.4 per cent) – as shown by Cosser & Sehlola (2009) – a consideration

of the preferences of those students who did enrol in HE in 2006 (Table 5.1) shows that Business / commerce is more popular by some way (20 per cent versus 15 per cent) than Engineering & other applied sciences and that support for Natural & mathematical sciences (8 per cent) is a long way off this. In other words, the programme preferences of Grade 12 students who went on to HE in 2006 are more differentiated than those of the 2005 cohort who did not necessarily go on to HE the next year.

While similar percentages of low- and high-SES students wanted to study Business / commerce and Engineering & other applied sciences (18 per cent and 15 per cent Business / commerce and 22 per cent and 19 per cent Engineering & other applied sciences respectively), the preference gap among middle-SES students is much greater: 21 per cent for Business / commerce versus 10 per cent for Engineering & other applied sciences. Nevertheless, higher percentages of high- than of middle- and especially of low-SES students wanted to enrol in these two programme areas. The other noteworthy patterns are a steady increase, by SES category, in the desire to study Health sciences (from 7 per cent to 11 per cent to 15 per cent) and Social sciences & applied humanities (6 per cent to 7 per cent to 10 per cent). Concomitantly, there is a steady decrease, by SES category, in the desire to study Natural & mathematical sciences – from 9 per cent to 8 per cent to 5 per cent.

Table 5.2 shows the relationship between Grade 12 students' preferences and their first-year enrolments in 2006.

Table 5.2: Exclusive programme area enrolments of students in 2006 who were in Grade 12 in 2005, by SES, in descending order by total number and percentage of students¹⁶

#	Programme area preference in 2005	Programme area enrolment in 2006	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Bus/com	Bus/com	63	12.3	40	16.8	28	14.1	131	13.8
2	NI/A	Bus/com	61	11.9	16	6.7	7	3.5	84	8.9
3	Engin	Engin	43	8.4	17	7.1	23	11.6	83	8.7
4	NI/A	Engin	31	6.1	19	8	11	5.5	61	6.4
5	NI/A	Soc sc	24	4.7	10	4.2	7	3.5	41	4.3
6	NI/A	Nat sc	22	4.3	10	4.2	3	1.5	35	3.7
7	Soc sc	Soc sc	12	2.3	8	3.4	9	4.5	29	3.1
8	Health	Health	10	2	6	2.5	6	3	22	2.3
9	Nat sc	Bus/com	15	2.9	4	1.7	2	1	21	2.2
10	NI/A	Health	7	1.4	8	3.4	6	3	21	2.2
11	NI/A	Hum	13	2.5	4	1.7	3	1.5	20	2.1
12	Nat sc	Nat sc	12	2.3	4	1.7	3	1.5	19	2
13	Engin	Nat sc	13	2.5	2	0.8	3	1.5	18	1.9
14	NI/A	Educ	9	1.8	5	2.1	3	1.5	17	1.8
15	Bus/com	Soc sc	7	1.4	5	2.1	4	2	16	1.7
16	Nat sc	Engin	8	1.6	5	2.1	2	1	15	1.6
17	Health	Bus/com	6	1.2	3	1.3	6	3	15	1.6
18	Health	Nat sc	7	1.4	3	1.3	4	2	14	1.5
19	Bus/com	Hum	9	1.8	1	0.4	2	1	12	1.3

¹⁶ For reasons of space, this table shows only those preference-enrolment combinations in which students enrolled in one programme area only – hence “Exclusive”. Appendix 1 indicates the full enrolment profile.

#	Programme area preference in 2005	Programme area enrolment in 2006	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
20	Health	Engin	4	0.8	7	2.9			11	1.2
21	Health	Soc sc	3	0.6	2	0.8	5	2.5	10	1.1
22	Hum	Hum	3	0.6	5	2.1	1	0.5	9	0.9
23	Engin	Bus/com	7	1.4			1	0.5	8	0.8
25	Soc sc	Bus/com	5	1	1	0.4	2	1	8	0.8
27	Engin	Health	4	0.8	1	0.4	2	1	7	0.7
29	Soc sc	Nat sc	4	0.8	1	0.4	1	0.5	6	0.6
32	Nat sc	Soc sc	3	0.6	2	0.8			5	0.5
34	Soc sc	Engin	3	0.6	2	0.8			5	0.5
35	Engin	Soc sc	2	0.4			3	1.5	5	0.5
36	Hum	Bus/com	2	0.4	1	0.4	2	1	5	0.5
37	Educ	Educ	1	0.2	3	1.3	1	0.5	5	0.5
38	Hum	Soc sc	1	0.2	1	0.4	3	1.5	5	0.5
39	Health	Hum			4	1.7	1	0.5	5	0.5
44	Bus/com	Nat sc	2	0.4			2	1	4	0.4
47	Health	Educ	1	0.2	1	0.4	2	1	4	0.4
56	Nat sc	Health			2	0.8	1	0.5	3	0.3
57	Engin	Hum					3	1.5	3	0.3
58	Hum	Health	2	0.4					2	0.2
61	Bus/com	Educ	1	0.2	1	0.4			2	0.2
64	Hum	Engin	1	0.2			1	0.5	2	0.2
65	Nat sc	Hum	1	0.2			1	0.5	2	0.2
68	Soc sc	Educ	1	0.2			1	0.5	2	0.2
70	Soc sc	Hum			1	0.4	1	0.5	2	0.2
72	Bus/com	Health	1	0.2					1	0.1
74	Educ	Bus/com	1	0.2					1	0.1
75	Educ	Health	1	0.2					1	0.1
85	Nat sc	Educ	1	0.2					1	0.1
116	Educ	Nat sc					1	0.5	1	0.1
Total			427	83.8	205	85.9	167	83.7	799	83.8
Multi-enrolment combinations			85	16.2	33	14.1	32	16.3	150	16.2
Grand total			512	100.0	238	100.0	199	100.0	949	100.0

Source: Author

Key: Nat sc = Natural & mathematical sciences; Engin = Engineering & other applied sciences; Health = Health sciences; Bus/com = Business / commerce; Educ = Education; Soc sc = Social sciences & applied humanities; Hum = Humanities; NI/A = Not indicated or available; # = Number of preference-enrolment combination

At the aggregate level, the following observations may be made from the table.

First, despite the fact that there are only seven discrete programme enrolment areas, there are 124 preference-enrolment combinations in the profile. The first 23 combinations involve only one programme area; but a relative large number – 76 of the 124 (or 61 per cent) – involve enrolment in two or more areas. This said, the vast majority of students (799, or 84 per cent) enrolled in only one programme area in 2006.

Second, the largest number of student enrolments was in Business / commerce programmes: 345 (or 30 per cent) across 42 preference-enrolment combinations. The second-highest number of enrolments was in Engineering & other applied sciences: 217 (or 19 per cent) across 26 combinations. This is followed by Natural & mathematical sciences (180, or 15 per cent) across 47 combinations, Social sciences & applied humanities (171, or 15 per cent) across 40 combinations, Humanities (122, or 10 per cent) across 41 combinations, Health sciences (81, or 7 per cent) across 22 combinations, and Education (43, or 4 per cent) across 15 combinations. The sum of these student enrolments is 1,159 because, following on from the last point in the first observation above, 150 students enrolled in more than one programme area.

Third, the number of students enrolling exclusively in the programme area for which they had expressed a preference in 2005 is as follows.

- In the Natural & mathematical sciences, 19 students (2 per cent of the total of 949 students in the profile) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in this area.
- In Engineering & other applied sciences, 83 students (9 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in this area.
- In the Health sciences, 22 students (2 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in this area.
- In Business / commerce, 131 students (14 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in this area.
- In Education, 5 students (fewer than 1 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in this area.
- In Social sciences & applied humanities, 29 students (3 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in this area.
- In the Humanities, 9 students (1 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in this area.

In other words, 31 per cent of students enrolled exclusively in the same programme area for which they had expressed a preference in 2005. The corollary is that two out of three students who enrolled in 2006 either did not enrol in the programme area of their choice or had failed to indicate a preferred programme area in 2005.

The highest degree of enrolment faithfulness to programme area preference, we see from Table 5.2, was in Business / commerce (14 per cent), followed by Engineering & other applied sciences (9 per cent), Social sciences & applied Humanities (3 per cent), Health sciences (2 per cent), Natural & mathematical sciences (2 per cent), Humanities (1 per cent), and Education (0.5 per cent). At the broad field of study level, very similar percentages of Business / commerce students and SET students (14 per cent versus 13 per cent) enrolled exclusively in the programme areas for which they had expressed a preference in 2005. Fewer than 5 per cent of students who enrolled in Humanities programmes, however, had wanted in 2005 to enrol in such programmes.

The fourth observation from Table 5.2 concerns the number of students who enrolled in the programme area for which they had not expressed a preference in 2005 (as indicated, in the Preference column in Table 5.3 by NI/A in the table). The numbers and percentages are as follows:

- Natural & mathematical sciences: 35 (or 4 per cent of the total)

- Engineering & other applied sciences: 61 (or 6 per cent of the total)
- Health sciences: 21 (or 2 per cent of the total)
- Business / commerce: 84 (or 9 per cent of the total)
- Education: 17 (or 2 per cent of the total)
- Social sciences & applied humanities: 41 (or 4 per cent of the total)
- Humanities: 20 (or 2 per cent of the total)

A juxtaposition of these figures with those for the percentages of enrolments in programme areas for which preferences were indicated in 2005 reads as follows:

Table 5.3: Programme area enrolments of students indicating preferences and of those not indicating preferences for study in the area in which they enrolled exclusively, 2005-2006 (%)¹⁷

Programme area	Enrolments of students having indicated preferences for study in the programme area	Enrolments of students not having indicated preferences for study in the programme area
Natural & mathematical sciences	2	4
Engineering & other applied sciences	9	6
Health sciences	2	2
Business / commerce	14	9
Education	1	2
Social sciences & applied humanities	3	4
Humanities	1	2

Source: Author

As Table 5.3 shows, the programme areas in which enrolments were higher amongst students who had not indicated a programme area preference in 2005 than amongst those who had are Natural & mathematical sciences, Education, Social sciences & applied humanities, and Humanities. These findings can be correlated with the data presented in the summary above, which showed a swing from the natural, engineering and health sciences between preference and enrolment – higher percentages of students having enrolled in the Humanities (Education, Social sciences & applied humanities; and Humanities) than had planned to do so, and lower percentages of students having enrolled in SET programmes than had planned to do so. Here, however, the issue is not about enrolment decisions confirming programme area preferences but about the relationship between preference indication and non-preference indication in the enrolment data. What the data in Table 5.3 reveal is that students who did not plan to proceed to HE or who were not sure of what programme area they wanted to study in (and who therefore failed to indicate a programme area preference in 2005) were more likely to have enrolled in the Humanities (broadly conceived) than in SET.

This distinction becomes sharper when we consider not only exclusive programme area enrolments but areas of enrolment more broadly – where students enrolled in more than one programme area. Thus, while 35 students who had not indicated a programme area preference enrolled in the Natural & mathematical sciences, there were 77 student enrolments in this area where no preference had been indicated in 2005. The distinctions in the other six programme areas are 61:80 for Engineering & other applied sciences, 21:32 for the Health sciences, 84:121 for Business / commerce, 17:27 for

¹⁷ Percentages in the table have been rounded off.

Education, 41:70 for Social sciences & applied humanities, and 20:59 for the Humanities. Expressed as ratios (the number of total enrolments in a programme area divided by the number of enrolments exclusively in that programme area), these figures reveal that the ratio for the Humanities is 3.0, followed, in rank order, by 2.2 for the Natural & mathematical sciences, 1.7 for Social sciences & applied humanities, 1.6 for Education, 1.5 for Health sciences, 1.4 for Business / commerce, and 1.3 for Engineering & other applied sciences. The higher the ratio, the greater the correlation between lack of programme area preference in 2005 and programme area enrolment in 2006. In other words, students who did not intend to enrol in the Humanities in 2006 or who did not know which programme area they wanted to enrol in were far more likely to enrol in the Humanities – and so forth, down the ranking. At the other end of the spectrum, then, students who did not plan to enrol in Engineering & other applied sciences or did not know which programme they wanted to enrol in were the least likely of all students who enrolled in 2006 to enrol in a programme in the Engineering & other applied sciences area.

The analysis so far has focussed on the data in Table 5.1 at the aggregate level. We shift the focus now to the disaggregated level, SES. Building on the approach taken above with regard to the aggregated data, from an SES perspective the following observations may be made.

First, despite the fact that there are only seven discrete programme enrolment areas, there are 93 low-SES, 64 middle-SES and 28 high-SES preference-enrolment combinations. The vast majority of students enrolled in only one programme area in 2006, however: 420, or 82 per cent of low-SES students; 205, or 86 per cent of middle-SES students; and 167, or 84 per cent of high-SES students. These percentages tell us that there is no significant distinction among students from different socio-economic backgrounds enrolling in one programme area only.

Second, the ranking of low-SES student enrolments in the seven programme areas is in line with the aggregate profile. The largest number of low-SES student enrolments was in Business / commerce programmes – 198, or 31 per cent of low-SES student enrolments. The second-highest number of enrolments was in Engineering & other applied sciences – 117 (or 18 per cent). This is followed by Natural & mathematical sciences – 111 (or 18 per cent), Social sciences & applied humanities – 85 (or 13 per cent), Humanities – 61 (or 10 per cent), Health sciences – 41 (or 6 per cent), and Education – 23 (or 4 per cent). The sum of these student enrolments is 1,159, because 85 students enrolled in more than one programme area.

Middle-SES student enrolments largely follow the aggregate profile, except that there were more enrolments in the Social sciences and applied humanities than in the Natural & mathematical sciences. The ranking extends from 82 student enrolments (or 29 per cent of middle-SES student enrolments) in Business / commerce, followed by 57 (or 20 per cent) in Engineering & other applied sciences, 38 (or 14 per cent) in Social sciences & applied humanities, 37 (or 13 per cent) in Natural & mathematical sciences, 34 (or 12 per cent) in the Humanities, 21 (or 8 per cent) in Health sciences, and 12 (or 4 per cent) in Education.

A similar ranking can be observed in high-SES student enrolments, except that enrolments of high-SES students in Social sciences & applied humanities outnumber those in both Engineering & other applied sciences and Natural & mathematical sciences. Sixty-five high-SES student enrolments (or

27 per cent) were in Business / commerce, followed by 48 (or 20 per cent) in Social sciences & applied humanities, 43 (or 18 per cent) in Engineering & other applied sciences, 32 (or 13 per cent) in Natural & mathematical sciences, 27 (or 11 per cent) in the Humanities, 19 (or 8 per cent) in Health sciences, and 8 (or 3 per cent) in Education.

Table 5.4 indicates the comparative profile by percentage.

Table 5.4: Student enrolments in the seven programme areas in 2006, by SES, in descending order by total percentage enrolments (%)¹⁸

Programme area	Low-SES	Middle-SES	High-SES	Total
Business / commerce	31	29	27	30
Engineering & other applied sciences	18	20	18	19
Natural & mathematical sciences	18	13	13	15
Social sciences & applied humanities	13	14	20	15
Humanities	10	12	11	10
Health sciences	6	8	8	7
Education	4	4	3	4
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Author

From the table we see that there were progressively higher percentages of low-SES than of middle-SES and high-SES student enrolments in Business / commerce programmes, a higher percentage of low-SES than of high-SES enrolments in Natural & mathematical sciences, and similar percentages of low-SES and high-SES student enrolments in Engineering & other applied sciences, the Humanities, Health sciences, and Education. Where there is a stark difference, however, is in the percentage of enrolments of high-SES students in the Social sciences & applied humanities – 20 per cent high-SES versus 13 per cent low-SES student enrolments. High-SES student enrolment is 5 per cent higher than the average (20 per cent versus 15 per cent). While there is a generally higher high-SES than low-SES enrolment in the human and social sciences, then, it is only in the Social sciences & applied humanities that a large distinction is evident.

The third SES-related observation from Table 5.1 concerns the number of students enrolling in the programme area for which they had expressed a preference in 2005. From Table 5.1 we see that, among low-SES students:

- Twelve students (2 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in the Natural & mathematical sciences enrolled in this area.
- Forty-three students (8 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Engineering & other applied sciences enrolled in this area.
- Ten students (2 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in the Health sciences enrolled in this area.
- Sixty-three students (12 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Business / commerce enrolled in this area.
- One student (0.2 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Education enrolled in this area.

¹⁸ Percentages are rounded off.

- Twelve students (2 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Social sciences & applied humanities enrolled in this area.
- Three students (1 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in the Humanities enrolled in this area.

Among middle-SES students:

- Four students (2 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in the Natural & mathematical sciences enrolled in this area.
- Seventeen students (7 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Engineering & other applied sciences enrolled in this area.
- Six students (2 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in the Health sciences enrolled in this area.
- Forty students (17 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Business / commerce enrolled in this area.
- Three students (1 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Education enrolled in this area.
- Eight students (3 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Social sciences & applied humanities enrolled in this area.
- Five students (2 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in the Humanities enrolled in this area.

Among high-SES students:

- Three students (1 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in the Natural & mathematical sciences enrolled in this area.
- Twenty-three students (12 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Engineering & other applied sciences enrolled in this area.
- Six students (3 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in the Health sciences enrolled in this area.
- Twenty-eight students (14 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Business / commerce enrolled in this area.
- One student (less than 1 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Education enrolled in this area.
- Nine students (4 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in Social sciences & applied humanities enrolled in this area.
- One student (less than 1 per cent of the total) who had expressed a preference for enrolment in the Humanities enrolled in this area.

Table 5.5 summarizes these data for ease of analysis.

Table 5.5: Programme area enrolments in 2006 of students who had expressed in 2005 a preference for enrolling in the same area, by SES, in descending order of enrolment by total percentage (%)¹⁹

Programme area	Low-SES	Middle-SES	High-SES	Total
Business / commerce	12	16	14	14
Engineering & other applied sciences	8	7	12	9

¹⁹ Percentages have been rounded off.

Programme area	Low-SES	Middle-SES	High-SES	Total
Social sciences & applied humanities	2	3	4	3
Natural & mathematical sciences	2	2	1	2
Health sciences	2	2	3	2
Humanities	1	2	1	1
Education	0	1	1	1
Total	27	33	36	32

Source: Author

From Table 5.5 we see that the percentages of students who enrolled in the programme area for which they had expressed a preference in 2005 increases by SES level – from 27 per cent of low-SES students to 33 per cent of middle-SES students to 36 per cent of high-SES students. The higher students' SES level, then, the greater their propensity to have enrolled in the programme area of their choice – a quarter of low-SES students versus a third of high-SES students having so enrolled.

From an individual programme area perspective, while slightly higher percentages of high-SES than of low-SES students enrolled in Business / commerce (14 per cent versus 12 per cent) and in Social sciences & applied humanities (4 per cent versus 2 per cent), the only notable difference lies in the difference between the percentages of high-SES and low-SES students who enrolled in Engineering & other applied sciences (12 per cent versus 8 per cent). The distinctions at SES level among the numbers of students who enrolled in more than one programme area are too small to allow for meaningful comparison.

Another notable observation is that the ranking of programme areas in Table 5.5, in terms of the percentages of students having enrolled in programme areas for which they had expressed a preference in 2005, is almost identical for students from low-, middle- and high socio-economic backgrounds. The only anomaly is in the high-SES ranking, where a higher percentage of students were faithful to their preferences in the Health sciences than in Natural & mathematical sciences.

The fourth and final observation from Table 5.1 concerns enrolments in the seven programme areas for which students had not indicated preferences in 2005. The disaggregation of the data by SES is indicated in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6: Programme area enrolments in the seven programme areas by students who did not indicate a programme preference in 2005, by SES, in descending order by total number and percentage of enrolments

Programme area	Low		Middle		High		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Business / commerce	61	11.9	16	6.7	7	3.5	84	8.9
Engineering & other applied sciences	31	6.1	19	8.0	11	5.5	61	6.4
Social sciences & applied humanities	24	4.7	10	4.2	7	3.5	41	4.3
Natural & mathematical sciences	22	4.3	10	4.2	3	1.5	35	3.7
Health sciences	7	1.4	8	3.4	6	3.0	21	2.2
Humanities	13	2.5	4	1.7	3	1.5	20	2.1
Education	9	1.8	5	2.1	3	1.5	17	1.8
Total	167	32.7	72	30.3	40	20	279	29.4

Source: Author

The table shows that the lower the percentage of students who enrolled in programme areas for which they had *not* expressed a preference in 2005 the higher their SES level, on a sliding scale: from 33 per cent of low-SES students to 30 per cent of middle-SES students to 20 percent of high-SES students. This is the corollary of the finding in the third observation above, where there was a positive correlation between enrolment in programme area for which a preference had been expressed in 2005 and SES – the higher the SES the more likely a student is to have enrolled in a programme area of his / her choice. The sliding scale from low- to high-SES is evident in four of the seven programme areas: Business / commerce; Social sciences & applied humanities; Natural & mathematical sciences; and Humanities. Low-SES students who enrolled in Business / commerce and Natural & mathematical sciences were particularly likely not to have indicated these as preferred programme areas in 2005: the distinctions are 12 per cent versus 4 per cent in the case of Business / commerce, 4 per cent versus 2 per cent in the case of Natural & mathematical sciences.

Summary of findings on translation of programme preferences into enrolments

This chapter has considered the preference-enrolment transition from the perspective of SES in order to ascertain the extent to which the enrolment decisions of students from low socio-economic backgrounds differed from those from middle but particularly those from high socio-economic backgrounds. In broad terms the data have shown little distinction; in other words, low-SES students have behaved in similar ways to their middle- and high-SES counterparts in terms of enrolment patterns in relation to programme preferences in 2005.

There are, however, two significant differences in student behaviour. These are summarized below.

First, a consideration of Grade 12 student programme area preferences (Table 5.1) showed that there was a steady increase, by ascending SES level, in the percentages of students wanting to study Health sciences and Social sciences & applied humanities but that there was a correspondingly steady decrease, by ascending SES level, in the percentages of students wanting to study Natural & mathematical sciences.

Second, there were a few notable findings from Table 5.2, which detailed the preference-enrolment combinations illustrating the school-to-HE transition:

- Fewer than a third of students (31 per cent) enrolled exclusively in the same programme area for which they had expressed a preference in 2005, revealing that two out of three students who enrolled in 2006 either did not enrol in the programme area of their 2005 choice or had failed to indicate a preference in 2005.
- While similar percentages of students who enrolled exclusively in Business / commerce and SET programmes in 2006 had wanted in 2005 to enrol in these programmes, a very small proportion of students who enrolled in Humanities (that is, Education, Social sciences & applied humanities, and Humanities) programmes in 2006 had planned to do so. A comparison of the enrolments of students who had indicated a preference in 2005 and of those who had not done so showed that non-indication of programme preference was strongly correlated with enrolment in the Humanities in 2006. This finding was confirmed

by the factoring in of non-exclusive enrolments – that is, where a student enrolled in more than one programme area: while 20 students who had not indicated a programme preference in 2005 enrolled in Humanities programmes only, three times as many who had not indicated a preference enrolled in a Humanities programme alongside one or more programmes from other programme areas.

- At the level of SES disaggregation, we saw that there were progressively higher percentages of low-SES than of middle-SES and high-SES student enrolments in Business / commerce programmes, a higher percentage of low-SES than of high-SES enrolments in Natural & mathematical sciences, and similar percentages of low-SES and high-SES student enrolments in Engineering & other applied sciences, the Humanities, Health sciences, and Education. Only in the Social sciences & applied humanities was the distinction between high- and low-SES enrolments large (20 per cent versus 13 per cent).
- From Table 5.5 we saw that the higher a student's SES, the more likely she / he was to have enrolled in the programme area of her / his choice. The corollary was that the lower a student's SES, the more likely she / he was to have enrolled in a programme area *not* of her / his choice. Low-SES students who enrolled in Business / commerce or in the Natural & mathematical sciences were particularly likely not to have indicated these as preferred programme areas while they were still at school.

CHAPTER 6 – PROGRESSION OF STUDENTS THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 considered the transition to higher education (HE) of the cohort of students who were in Grade 12 in 2005. This chapter shifts the focus to the second of the three stages in the student journey: progression through HE.

There are two parts to the chapter. Part One focuses on the 2006 to 2008 period, exploring the HE destinations, in 2006 and 2008, of the cohort of students who were in Grade 12 in 2005. The data upon which this part of the analysis is conducted are drawn from the 2006 and 2008 tracer study surveys. Included in Part One are: an analysis of the factors affecting the 2008 destinations of the 2005 student cohort; a qualitative analysis of the answers of a sample of students who participated in the 2nd tracer survey (in 2008) in substantiating their responses to a question about their exercise of choice; and a qualitative investigation of the individual life and study trajectories of ten students who participated in the 2005, 2006 and / or 2008 surveys.

Part Two extends the timeframe and broadens the sample, establishing a typology of the pathways of those students who were surveyed in 2005 (Cosser, 2009) and who enrolled in a HE institution between 2006 and 2010. The data upon which this part of the analysis is conducted are drawn from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) database for the 2006 to 2010 period and comprise the individual records of those students who participated in the Grade 12 Learner Aspiration Survey 2005 (Cosser, 2009) whose identities could be linked to the HEMIS database of students via student identity numbers. The purpose of the establishment of a typology of student pathways is threefold: it provides a tool for classifying pathways that can be replicated in other national HE systems; it offers a means of analysing student pathways for HE policy and planning purposes; and, most importantly for this thesis, it enables an investigation of whether the NQF objective of promoting access, mobility and progression was realised in the pathways of students from low socio-economic backgrounds.

PART ONE: STUDENT DESTINATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION, 2006 AND 2008

This part of the chapter considers the enrolment destinations of the 2005 Grade 12 cohort who were registered for HE study programmes in 2006 and 2008. The focus here is on the factors that influenced passage and enrolment decisions; to this end, Part One will include an

analysis of qualitative data, analysing the discourse of a sample of students to broaden our understanding of the complex web of factors influencing their education and life trajectories.

The first section below describes the enrolment destinations of students, looking at the diversity of combinations of qualification and programme destinations in 2006 and 2008. The factors influencing enrolments and the trajectories students followed are analysed in the course of the section.

Qualification types in which students were enrolled in 2008

A total of 159 of the 920 respondents to the second tracer study (2008) were enrolled in – and had therefore achieved formal access to – HE in 2008.

Very similar percentages of students were registered for a University Professional 1st Bachelor's Degree (38 per cent) and a National Diploma (36 per cent), only 9 per cent of students having registered for a University General Bachelor's Degree. There was a higher percentage of high-SES enrolments than low-SES enrolments in University Professional 1st Bachelor's Degrees (50 per cent versus 35 per cent); and – not necessarily a corollary – there was a higher percentage of low-SES enrolments than high-SES enrolments in National Diplomas (40 per cent versus 30 per cent).

More than a quarter of student enrolments (27 per cent) were in the programme area of Business / commerce, followed by Social sciences (19 per cent), Natural & mathematical sciences (17 per cent), Humanities and Engineering & other applied sciences (each 13 per cent), Health sciences (7 per cent), and Education (4 per cent). Low-SES students were more highly represented in Business / commerce, Social sciences & applied humanities, and the Humanities than were high-SES students (the percentages were, respectively, 29 per cent versus 13 per cent, 21 per cent versus 13 per cent, and 14 per cent versus 7 per cent). The corollary is that high-SES students were more highly represented than were low-SES students in the natural & mathematical sciences (27 per cent versus 16 per cent), Engineering & other applied sciences (20 per cent versus 11 per cent), Health sciences (13 per cent versus five per cent), and Education (7 per cent versus 3 per cent). Because of the small numbers involved, however, the findings should be treated with some caution and taken as broadly representative only.

The only variables having influenced programme of enrolment to a large degree in 2008 were interest in the field in question (4.4) and job opportunities in South Africa with a qualification in the field (4.1). In 2006 interest in the field was equally influential; but job opportunities in South Africa were less so. This is unsurprising given that a large proportion of respondents would have been nearing the completion of their studies in 2008.

Almost as influential for students in 2008 was the notion of finding a job abroad after qualification in the field (3.9) – a factor far more influential than in 2006 (3.5). Only two of

the top five most influential factors, job opportunities in South Africa and job opportunities abroad, are extrinsically motivated; the other three are intrinsically motivated, born out of genuine interest or concern for the well-being of others. Remuneration was apparently not as influential a variable (scoring 3.4 in both 2006 and 2008). Besides on the issue of job searching, there is remarkable congruence in students' rating and ranking of influences over a two-year period.

While the first two variables – interest in the field of study, and job opportunities in South Africa – were the only two that, at the aggregate level, had an unambiguously strong influence on students' programme choices in 2008 (that is, they both scored over 4.0), at the SES-disaggregated level the mean scores for these two variables were higher for high-SES students than for all students, while three more variables had a strong influence on the programme choices of students from high-SES backgrounds: job opportunities abroad (4.4); opportunities to use the resulting qualification in one's chosen profession (4.1); and opportunities to use the qualification to contribute to development (4.1).

The other variable that influenced high SES students far more significantly than low- and middle-SES students was the reputation of the school / faculty / department in which students were studying; the scores were 3.8, 2.8 and 3.2 for high-, middle- and low-SES respectively.

Enrolment destinations of the 2005 student cohort in 2006 and 2008

The discussion so far has focussed on the nature of student destinations in 2008. This subsection compares students' qualification and programme destinations at two points – 2006 and 2008.

If we exclude the combinations in which students did not indicate the qualifications for which they were enrolled in 2008, there are 37 different qualification combinations. Only 19 of these combinations, however, were subscribed to by more than one student each. The highest percentages of students were enrolled for the same qualification in 2006 and 2008 – 20 per cent in a University Professional 1st Bachelor's Degree (UPB), 18 per cent in a National Diploma. A total of 45 per cent of students were enrolled in the same qualification in both 2006 and 2008.

Eighteen per cent of students who were in HE in 2006 and 2008 switched qualifications, the largest percentage (7 per cent) switching from a University General 1st Bachelor's Degree (UGB) to a UPB. Many students, however, attained qualifications between 2006 and 2008 that were stepping-stones to the qualifications for which they were enrolled in 2008. Previous analysis (Cosser & Sehlola, 2009) has shown that 23 per cent of students attained a National Certificate,²⁰ 10 per cent a University Certificate / Diploma, 8 per cent a National Higher Certificate, and 7 per cent a National Diploma. Two students achieved N-certificates from an FET college.

²⁰ It is not clear, however, whether a proportion of these may have interpreted the National Senior Certificate, or matric certificate, as a National Certificate.

Four per cent each of students were: unemployed in 2006 and enrolled for a National Diploma in 2008; repeated Grade 12 and enrolled for a UPB; and switched from a UPG to a UGB between 2006 and 2008. Three per cent each of students: repeated Grade 12 in 2006 and enrolled for a ND in 2008; and were enrolled in a UGB in 2006 and 2008. A total of 101 students (69 per cent) proceeded directly from school to HE in 2006.

The SES-disaggregated profile shows that the highest percentage of low-SES students (27 per cent) were enrolled for a National Diploma in 2006 and 2008, compared to only 9 per cent of high-SES students. On the other hand, while 64 per cent of high-SES students were enrolled in a UPB in 2006 and 2008, only 16 per cent of low-SES students were thus enrolled. This profile reinforces the high-SES versus low-SES enrolment profile of students in 2008.

Programme preferences for and enrolment destinations in HE: A comparative analysis, 2005, 2006 and 2008

This section of the chapter considers the programmatic destinations of the cohort – which programme areas students indicated while still at school that they intended enrolling in (that is, programmatic preferences) and which programme areas they actually enrolled in, whether in 2006 and 2008 or in 2008 only. Only the destinations of those students who indicated their programme enrolment areas in 2008 are included in Table 6.1; the destinations of 25 students are therefore excluded. While the table is unwieldy, it is presented in its entirety to enable analyses of a number of data points that would not have been possible had some of the data been omitted.

Table 6.1: 2005 programme area preferences and 2006 and 2008 programme area enrolments of students enrolled in higher education institutions in 2008, by SES, in descending order by total

#	Programme preference-enrolment combination			Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	Preference, 2005	Enrolment, 2006	Enrolment, 2008	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Bus/com	Bus/com	Bus/com	10	10.0	4	18.2			14	10.4
2	Engin	Engin	Engin	6	6.0	1	4.5	2	16.7	9	6.7
3	Health	Health	Health	2	2.0	1	4.5	1	8.3	4	3.0
4	Health	Soc sc	Soc sc	3	3.0					3	2.2
5	Hum	Hum	Hum	1	1.0	2	9.1			3	2.2
6	NI	Bus/com	Bus/com	3	3.0					3	2.2
7	Soc sc	Soc sc	Soc sc			2	9.1	1	8.3	3	2.2
8	Bus/com	Soc sc	Soc sc	2	2.0					2	1.5
9	Engin	Nat sc	Nat sc	1	1.0			1	8.3	2	1.5
10	Engin	NE-Employed	Engin	2	2.0					2	1.5
11	Nat sc	Bus/com	Bus/com	2	2.0					2	1.5
12	Nat sc	Soc sc	Soc sc	2	2.0					2	1.5
13	NI	Hum	Hum	1	1.0			1	8.3	2	1.5
14	NI	Nat sc	Nat sc	1	1.0	1	4.5			2	1.5
15	NI-FET	Engin	Engin	2	2.0					2	1.5
16	NI	NI	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
17	NI	NI	Nat sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
18	Health	NE-FET	Health, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
19	Engin	NE-Unemployed	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
20	Engin	NE-Employed	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
21	Health	NE-School	Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
22	Health	NE-Unemployed	Bus/com, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
23	Bus/com	Educ, Soc sc	Educ	1	1.0					1	0.7
24	Bus/com	NE-School	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
25	Bus/com	NE-Unemployed	Educ	1	1.0					1	0.7
26	Bus/com	NE-Unemployed	Nat sc, Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
27	Bus/com	NE-Employed	Bus/com, Soc sc, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7

#	Programme preference-enrolment combination			Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	Preference, 2005	Enrolment, 2006	Enrolment, 2008	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
28	Soc sc	NE-Unemployed	Soc sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
29	Nat sc	NE-FET	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
30	Nat sc	NE-School	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
31	Educ	Nat sc, Bus/com	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
32	Engin	Engin	Nat sc, Engin	1	1.0					1	0.7
33	Engin	Health	Health	1	1.0					1	0.7
34	Engin	Nat sc	Nat sc, Engin	1	1.0					1	0.7
35	Engin	Nat sc, Engin	Engin	1	1.0					1	0.7
36	Health	Health	Nat sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
37	Health	Nat sc	Nat sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
38	Health	Nat sc, Soc sc, Hum	Nat sc, Bus/com, Soc sc, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
39	Nat sc	NE-Unemployed	Nat sc, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
40	Nat sc	NE-Employed	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
41	NI	NE-FET	Health	1	1.0					1	0.7
42	Hum	Bus/com	Nat sc, Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
43	NI	NE-School	Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
44	Nat sc	Engin	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
45	Nat sc	Nat sc, Bus/com	Nat sc, Bus/com, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
46	Nat sc	Nat sc, Engin	Nat sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
47	NI	NE-School	Nat sc, Bus/com, Educ, Soc sc, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
48	NI	Bus/com	Soc sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
49	NI	Bus/com, Soc sc	Nat sc, Bus/com, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
50	NI	Engin	Engin	1	1.0					1	0.7
51	NI	Health	Health	1	1.0					1	0.7
52	NI	Health, Soc sc	Nat sc, Health	1	1.0					1	0.7
53	NI	Nat sc, Bus/com	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
54	NI	NE-Unemployed	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
55	NI	NE-Unemployed	Educ	1	1.0					1	0.7
56	NI	NE-Unemployed	Soc	1	1.0					1	0.7
57	Unsure	Bus/com	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7

#	Programme preference-enrolment combination			Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	Preference, 2005	Enrolment, 2006	Enrolment, 2008	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
58	NI	NI	Soc sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
59	NI	Soc sc	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
60	Unsure	Soc sc, Hum	Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
61	NI-Agricultural	Hum	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
62	NI-Agricultural	NE-Unemployed	Engin	1	1.0					1	0.7
63	Unsure	NE-Employed	Educ	1	1.0					1	0.7
64	NI-FET	Bus/com	Bus/com, Soc sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
65	NI-FET	Bus/com	Bus/com, Soc sc, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
66	NI-FET	Bus/com, Soc sc, Hum	Soc sc, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
67	NI-FET	Nat sc, Educ, Hum	Nat sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
68	NI-FET	NE-Unemployed	Nat sc, Bus/com, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
69	NI-FET	Soc sc	Nat sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
70	NI-Nursing	Bus/com	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
71	NI-Nursing	Nat sc	Bus/com	1	1.0					1	0.7
72	NI-Nursing	NE-FET	Nat sc, Bus/com, Soc sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
73	Soc sc	NE-FET	Health	1	1.0					1	0.7
74	Soc sc	NE-Unemployed	Soc sc, Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
75	Soc sc	Engin	Engin	1	1.0					1	0.7
76	Soc sc	Nat sc, Soc sc	Soc sc	1	1.0					1	0.7
77	Soc sc	Soc sc	Hum	1	1.0					1	0.7
78	Engin	Nat sc, Bus/com	Engin			1	4.5			1	0.7
79	NI	Bus/com	Nat sc			1	4.5			1	0.7
80	NI	Educ	Educ			1	4.5			1	0.7
81	NI	Hum	Health			1	4.5			1	0.7
82	Bus/com	NE-Unemployed	Bus/com			1	4.5			1	0.7
83	Engin	NE-FET	Engin			1	4.5			1	0.7
84	Soc sc	NE-FET	Soc sc			1	4.5			1	0.7
85	NI	NE-FET	Engin			1	4.5			1	0.7
86	NI	NE-NEA	Nat sc, Educ, Hum			1	4.5			1	0.7
87	NI	NE-School	Bus/com			1	4.5			1	0.7

#	Programme preference-enrolment combination			Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	Preference, 2005	Enrolment, 2006	Enrolment, 2008	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
88	NI-FET	NE-Employed	Bus/com			1	4.5			1	0.7
89	Health	Educ	Educ					1	8.3	1	0.7
90	Hum	Engin	Nat sc					1	8.3	1	0.7
91	NI	Health	Nat sc, Engin, Health					1	8.3	1	0.7
92	NI	Nat sc, Bus/com, Soc sc	Bus/com, Soc sc					1	8.3	1	0.7
93	Soc sc	Bus/com	Bus/com					1	8.3	1	0.7
94	NI	NE-FET	Nat sc					1	8.3	1	0.7
Total				100	100.0	22	100.0	12	100.0	134	100.0

Source: Author

Key: NI = Not indicated; NI-FET = Not indicated because planning to enter an FET College (and so forth, for other institution types: Nursing College; Agricultural College); NE-FET = Not enrolled in a HE institution but in an FET College (and similarly for enrolment in a School); NE-Employed = Not enrolled in an institution but Employed (and so forth, for other status types – Unemployed; and NEA = Not economically active).

At the aggregate level we can make six observations from the table.

First, there are 94 different combinations representing the destinations of 134 students – a great diversity of trajectories. Seventy-nine of these combinations, however, were subscribed to by only one student each.

Second, the greatest consistency between preference and enrolment across both years (2006 and 2008) can be seen in Business / commerce (14 students) – followed by Engineering & other applied sciences (9), Health sciences (4), Humanities (2), and Social sciences & applied humanities (2). Subscription to these programme areas accounts for the pathways of 24 per cent of the total. Expressed differently, a quarter of all students in the profile enrolled in 2006 and 2008 in the programme area of their choice in 2005.

Third, the number of students who had indicated a preference for and enrolled in a programme area in 2008 or in 2006 and 2008 is as follows:

- Business / commerce: 18 students
- Engineering & other applied sciences: 16 students
- Social sciences & applied humanities: 8 students
- Health sciences: 6 students
- Natural & mathematical sciences and Humanities: 3 students each; and
- Education: no students.

The number of students expressing a preference for and enrolling in programme areas other than Business / commerce and Engineering & other applied sciences is relatively small.

Fourth, 63 per cent of students were enrolled in the same programme area in 2008 as in 2006. The highest number of students (26, or 19 per cent) were enrolled in Business / commerce in 2006 and 2008, followed by 14 each (10 per cent each) in Engineering & other applied sciences and in Social sciences & applied humanities, 10 (7 per cent) in Natural & mathematical sciences, 8 each (6 per cent each) in Health sciences and Humanities, and only 3 (2 per cent) in Education.

Fifth, the enrolment profile for students who had not indicated in 2005 a preference for study in a HE programme extends from 13 students enrolled in Business / commerce programmes to 11 in Natural & mathematical sciences, 8 in Social sciences & applied humanities, 7 in Humanities, 5 in Health sciences, and 3 each in Engineering & other applied sciences and in Education. Given that 26 students enrolled in Engineering & other applied sciences between 2006 and 2008 (56 students having enrolled in Business / commerce over this period), it is remarkable that so few students who had not indicated a choice of programme area in 2005 enrolled in this field. A comparison with Business / commerce reveals that while 23 per cent of students who enrolled in Business / commerce had not indicated a preferred programme area in 2005, only 12 per cent of students who enrolled in Engineering & other applied sciences had not indicated a preferred programme area. Engineering & other applied sciences

is therefore least likely to be the default programme area for enrolment among those who either did not indicate an enrolment preference in 2005 or who were unsure about their preferred enrolment area (whether they indicated uncertainty or not).

And sixth, 36 (27 per cent) of the total number of students (134) included in Table 6.1 were not enrolled in a HE institution in 2006 – 13 of them unemployed, 9 enrolled in an FET College, 7 employed, 6 repeating Grade 12 at school, and one not economically active. The majority of those not enrolled in a HE institution in 2006, unsurprisingly, were enrolled in a Business / commerce programme in 2008 (16 students), followed, surprisingly, by the Humanities (10), Social sciences & applied humanities (7), Natural & mathematical sciences (also 7), Engineering and other applied sciences (5), Education (also 5), and Health sciences (3).

At the level of disaggregation by SES, the diversity of preference-enrolment combinations renders most analysis invalid: the numbers themselves are statistically negligible. At most we can say that enrolment in Business / commerce programmes appears to be more likely among low-SES students, while enrolment in Engineering & other applied sciences appears to be more likely among high-SES students. This would be consistent with the shift from preference to enrolment observed in Chapter 5.

Exercise of choice

A total of 147 of the 159 students enrolled in a HE institution in 2008 who participated in the 2008 tracer study provided an answer to the question “To what extent do you feel that you have been able to *choose* your present life situation?” The mean score on the five-point Likert-type scale was 3.9, suggesting a fair degree of freedom of choice among the HE students in the 2008 data-set – and certainly considerably greater freedom than that expressed by the total of 767 respondents (the total response profile) to the question, for whom the score was 3.3.

From a socio-economic background perspective, the correlation between extent to which life situation was chosen and the SES of the chooser (Table 6.2) is neither strong nor predictable.

Table 6.2: Correlation between extent of exercise of choice and SES of student, 2008

Extent of exercise of choice	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES	Total
Not at all	5.9	0	0	4.5
2	10.8	0	9.1	9.0
3	19.6	9.5	27.3	18.7
4	30.4	38.1	18.2	30.6
To a very large extent	33.3	54.2	45.5	37.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Author

Though 6 per cent of low-SES students indicated that they had not been able to choose their life situation at all (compared to no students in the middle- or high-SES categories), this is as likely to be the result of the distribution of students among the three socio-economic categories (76 per cent of students whose SES was calculable and who indicated their choice were low-SES students) as anything else.

Very similar percentages of students from low- and high-socio-economic status backgrounds (11 per cent versus 9 per cent) indicated 2 as their extent of choice; and while a higher percentage of high- than of low-SES students (27 per cent versus 20 per cent) indicated 3 as their extent of choice, a far higher percentage of low- than of high-SES students (30 per cent versus 18 per cent) indicated 4. Though the percentage of high-SES students indicating choice *To a very large extent* (46 per cent) is considerably higher than the percentage of low-SES students (33 per cent) indicating choice *To a very large extent*, the percentages of low- and high-SES students whose extent of choice was positive (that is, a combination of 4 and *To a very large extent*) are identical: 64 per cent of low- and of high-SES students felt to a large or very large extent that they had been able to choose their life situation.

The fact that SES and extent of choice are only weakly correlated suggests that low-SES students exercised very similar levels of choice over their life situations as did their high-SES counterparts.

Of the 147 students enrolled in a HE institution who indicated their extent of choice, 140 provided reasons for their rating. Table 6.3 indicates the responses of those students who rated their exercise of choice 3 or higher and whose reasons are examined in the narrative that follows the table.

Table 6.3: Reasons provided by students for their responses concerning the exercise of choice of life situation

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	SES of student	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen ²¹
1	3	1	Because I am now going to be in possession to work according to my course although it was not my first option
2	3	3	You are never completely in control of what happens in your life, you must make the best choices with the life situation given (or available) to you. Stop blaming other people and do something yourself to improve your life
3	3	1	Life is a feild with great opportunities and its up to myself if wheather do I take the ball and soccer or do I seat back; waiting for something I dont even know; will come. I realised I shouldnt waste time and grab every opportunities given to me and to always try my but making my family if; I shouldnt worry about yesterday but today and not tomorrow as its another day; with other threats and opportunities. I will always succed. And to never give up in life
4	3	1	I choose to study nursing for gueranteed job after studying, having a better chance I would do something I love to do and cofortable with becoming a nurse wasn't excatly my dream but I'll make it work
5	3	1	I'm not sure I just took every opportunity that comes to me
6	4	1	The choices I've made towards life and the positive attitude I have self confidence I have in myself, respect for other people, the support I get from people around me, turning all the discouraging into something positive like inspiration
7	4	1	Since matriculation I learn a lot of things about life, how life can upbring a person. I having this present life make me realise that I've made a good dicision, I am realy happy whrer I am now, hope that everything my life is gonna go well, Im living strong looking forward to have a good future ahead of me, thanks for letting me to be part of the search it really helps
8	4	N/A	Even though I'm not happy with the fact that I'm not working, I'm actually glad that I chose to study the course that I'm studying at the moment and every day I look forward to another day. Graphic design is very challenging and I learn more and more each and every lesson.
9	4	N/A	I wish I was at university studying full time so I could spend more attention on my studies working and studing at same time is very stranous you pass your studies by chance dont have enough time to give it my best but I've accepted because it teaches me responsibility, decipline and hardworking

²¹ Original spelling and syntax are retained in the responses below.

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	SES of student	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen ²¹
10	4	2	I would like to work part-time to help around the household financially but if I do then my studies will suffer due to time constraints I would have preferred to go into the music industry but financially it isn't viable I've recently changed from aeronautical engineering to industrial engineering due to a change in interests I still have passion for aircraft but I have a greater passion for business and industrial engineering gives more insight into the business side of engineering
11	4	1	Even though I did not enrol at an institution that I wanted to I proved myself to my parents that I can still achieve my goals studying at a different institution. My parents don't dictate my life but they just try to assist and help me whenever they can, everything that I do is for me and not for them. That's why I feel that I have able to choose my present life situation to a large extent I make my own decisions
12	4	1	To a high extent because Im very happy about everything that is going except that I feel that my life will be much better if a had a job I really need a job because the money that my parents deposite for me every month it not enough but it ok because Im living like other students and I know that they don't have money
13	4	1	I have been free and able to make my own decisions
14	4	1	My present life situation now is what I wanted in life that is to study and become succesful, have my own assets and live happy and support my family. I feel happy living my life studying!
15	4	1	Because what I wanted was to study and now I am studying the cause of my dreams
16	4	1	I know very well that Im current living the life I want of being independent Im from a hard time through social relationship and close friends whom I socialise with so now I keep myself busy in avoiding any disturbance from my friends
17	4	1	Because I've been able to pass all my subjects for semester being confident to do something positive in life
18	4	1	Being positive toward lyf and look at life differently from previously . Happiness is very important to everyone everytime and again we deserve to be have and to live our lives. School is also the most part of my life and which I want it to stay like that, I want to be a very successful woman and a business woman too. And be able to be independent and live my life on my terms
19	4	1	All my decisions were made by me with little influnce or advice from other sources
20	4	1	The academic objectives that I've set myself at the beginning of 2005 have been reached more than set standard my aim is to complete degree within predetermined duration and up to so far things are going well and I'm left with only 3rd year last semester work to graduate next year April. This form part of greater positive base for successful future in entering job market I am delighen with this choice but aim high
21	4	1	My present life is struggling but as I said that I'm trying to keep myself positive. I'm still looking for my field which is accounting or music both I did not het to them coz of results reasons but I'm not gonna give up because I know that my God is my way, life and

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	SES of student	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen ²¹
			he knows my future. Thank you
22	4	3	Because I'm leaving an healthy positive life style and I'm doing very well in school
23	4	1	My parents was contributing positively for me to choose whatever I wanted to do after Gr 12 they also had a positive outlook on further studies and lead me into that direction since I was a little girl
24	5	1	I make the most of bad situations and focus on the positives rather than the negative aspects
25	5	2	My parents have brought me up very well and in a healthy family environment they have stood by me every step of the way evry step of the way and have influenced me in a positive way I have been given the opportunity to study what I have a passion for
26	5	1	Because I am studying for what I realy love and I am perfoming pretty well so far my biggest achievement know is that I have only two subjects left know
27	5	2	Because I will never do something which I am not happy with & whatever I do I like to do it it well no-one forced me to do anything I make my own (with advice of course) because I know my abilities & capabilities
28	5	1	Being able to make my own choices regarding my studies and my life. Not being pressured by anyone to achieve something but just doing it for myself
29	5	2	Well, I believe that success comes with a will to achieve great things and by believing i yourself and never giving up, you will never fail. I as my own person decide on what I feel is right for me, and if failure is a consequence of any action, you should get up and do it all over again, which is why I live a purpose driven lifestyle
30	5	1	Everything that I'm currently is everything that I have always wanted to do in my life. I performed very bad during my 2006 academic year so I promised myself I will make it up and I did now I can where I'm going and I am very close to my destiny of becoming an internal auditor. I have been able to choose my own life as no one pushed me or persuaded me to become what I am only with the help and support of my parents. Everything is going perfect for me thank you I wish this research could continue
31	5	2	The way I perfomed in high school paved the path to where I am today and the hard work which I did back then was total under my control to perform well.
32	5	1	It because I'm positive about how I feel about my present life situation and I know exactly what I want to become and I don't let my friends influence me in any kind of way whether it a positive or negative way. I don't like to be influenced by any one in any decision that I make, I choose to live my own life and not be told what to do unless if it good

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	SES of student	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen ²¹
33	5	1	It because I choose the path I want to follow and Im passionate and dedicated to what I do the path that I choose is flexible in a way that there is opportunity for short term as well as long term plan. And what I've learned through the years gives me the opportunity to choose more than one proffoson that I can follow or peisut
34	5	1	I was not forced to do what I did not choose to do my decisions were purely my own I was always supported by friends and family in all my decisions I am in my current life situation due to my own choices in life
35	5	1	Because my parents gave me my own choice to decide what I want to study
36	5	N/A	I've always wanted to be a teacher but thought that keeping my doors open is a great idea since I'm measuring in English and Psychology which opens a lot of doors but my main reason is that we want to see change we want to see other student succeeding through hard work and dedication
37	5	1	All things I have done or achieved is done through my own choice

Source: Author

The language of students who rated their exercise of choice 3 is interspersed with expressions that signal a determination to turn negative into positive: “you must make the best choices with the life situation given ... to you” (#2); “grab every opportunities given to me” (#3); “I just took every opportunity that comes to me” (#5). The other feature of the responses of those who rated the exercise of choice 3 is the possibility of turning adversity into success: “I am now going to be in possession to work according to my course although it was not my first option” (#1); “becoming a nurse wasn’t exactly my dream but I’ll make it work” (#4).

The italicized sections in the statements “you must make the best choices *with the life situation given ... to you*” (#2), “I am now going to be in possession to work according to my course *although it was not my first option*” (#1), and “becoming a nurse wasn’t exactly my dream *but I’ll make it work*” (#4) not only posit, through syntactic contrast, a positive alternative to a negative “given” but suggest a willingness to entertain, however resignedly, that alternative.

More positive terminology still enters the discourse of those students who rated their exercise of choice 4. The word “positive” itself appears nine times in students’ statements (in #s 6, 18, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23). Words with positive connotations abound amongst the assertions of students rating exercise of choice 4: *self-confidence, inspiration, happy, good, glad, easy, dedicated, determined, responsible, pride, successful, well, and healthy*.

Besides this shift from a largely negative lexicon (characterising the responses of those who rated their exercise of choice 1 or 2) to a largely positive lexicon, there are four other notable features in the discourse of those who rated the exercise of choice 4. First, a future orientation begins to manifest itself, in such expressions as “looking forward to have a good future ahead of me” (#7), “every day I look forward to another day” (#8), “I want to be a very successful woman and a business woman too” (#18), and “This form part of greater positive base for successful future in entering job market” (#20).

Second, there is a sense of realism in many utterances: “Even though I’m not happy with the fact that I’m not working, I’m actually glad that I chose to study the course I am studying ... I learn more each and every lesson” (#8); “*but I’ve accepted* [having to study part-time and work simultaneously] because it teaches me responsibility, discipline and hardworking” (#9; emphasis added); “*I would have preferred* to go into the music industry *but financially it isn’t viable*” (#10; emphasis added); and “*the money that my parents deposit for me every month it not enough but it ok because Im living like other students and I know that they don’t have money*” (#12). The italicized sections in these utterances 9, 10 and 12 betray, through the use of the conjunctive *but*, the desire to accept in the same breath the alternative to the stated proposition. A subtler version of such contrast is to be found in the utterance “*Even though I’m not happy* with the fact that I’m not working, *I’m actually glad* that I chose to study the course I am studying” (#8) through the juxtaposition of “not happy” and “glad”.

Third, the congruity between aspirations and students’ current life situations that is a strong feature of the responses of students who rated the exercise of choice in their lives a 5 is adumbrated in the responses of those who rated the exercise of choice a 4: “My present life situation now is what I wanted in life” (#14); and “what I wanted was to study and now I am studying the course of my dreams” (#15). In the reasons given for the highest rating (5), the discourse is about “the

opportunity to study what I have a passion for” (#25), “studying for what I really love” (#26), and “Everything that I’m currently is everything that I have always wanted to do in my life” (#30).

Fourth, the need to assert independence characterises the responses of those who rated exercise of choice 4: “I proved myself to my parents that I can still achieve my goals studying at a different institution” (#11); “I have been free and able to make my own decisions” (#13); “living the life I want of being independent” (#16); “[I want to] be independent and live my life on my terms” (#18); and “All my decisions were made by me with little influence or advice from other sources” (#19).

The responses of those who rated the exercise of choice 5 are characterised even more strongly by the positive assertions that marked exercise-of-choice 4 responses. Congruity between aspiration and realisation and a proliferation of choices are particularly evident. The words *enjoy*, *love*, *dreams*, *passionate*, *satisfied*, *fulfilled*, *motivation*, *guidance*, and *hard work* recur in this set of responses, the last five of these suggesting a maturity that is arguably lacking for the most part even in the responses of those who rated the exercise of choice 4. When “hard work” is associated not merely with one’s own but with other people’s success, moreover, as in “we want to see other student succeeding through hard work and dedication” (#36), the level of the maturity bar is raised.

For a few of those students who rated their ability to exercise choice 5, there is a recognition of the pathway along which they are journeying: “The way I performed in high school paved the path to where I am today” (#31); and “I choose the path I want to follow ... there is opportunity for short term as well as long term plan” (#33). Such a recognition links the sequences of events that mark the stages of life’s journey, enabling those who can articulate this recognition to plan and to experience the effects of their planning – a platform for building on past and present successes.

The extent to which one feels able to exercise choice is seemingly correlated with the notion of owning one’s life situation. Those students able to exercise choice appear to own their situations. An analysis of the ownership language of the responses across the three rating categories included in Table 6.3 illustrates the point. Three responses in the fourth category contain the word “own”, while nine of the responses in the fifth category contain the word “own”. Making one’s own choices or decisions is a particular feature of the responses of those who rated the exercise of choice 5 (#s 28, 29, 34, 35, 37), while one’s life being one’s own also recurs (#s 30 and 32). The acme of life ownership is arguably to be found in the following utterance:

Well, I believe that success comes with a will to achieve great things and by believing in yourself and never giving up, you will never fail. I *as my own person* decide on what I feel is right for me, and if failure is a consequence of any action, you should get up and do it all over again, which is why I live a purpose driven lifestyle (#29; emphasis added).

Being one’s “own person” here entails making one’s own decisions and refusing to accept failure as final – in this sense, owning one’s actions.

Individual student passage through higher education

This section of the chapter homes in on just ten of the students who had participated in the baseline survey of 2005, using some of the tools of textual analysis described by Fowler (1986) to differentiate the students on the basis of their responses to a set of interview questions posed to

them in 2008. The objective here is to correlate students' world-views, as encoded through the language they use to describe their life's trajectories, with their pathways into and through HE.

The subject choices of interviewees for the Further Education and Training (FET) schooling phase are summarised in Table 6.4. Since HE enrolment options are constrained to a large extent by subject choices for the FET phase, such choices constitute an important part of the pre-HE pathway narrative.

Table 6.4: FET phase subject choices of the ten interviewees in Grade 9

CHARTING OF POST-SCHOOL AND CAREER TRAJECTORIES THROUGH SUBJECT PREFERENCES FOR FET SCHOOLING PHASE
Sarie had exposure to a range of career guidance interventions: various companies and universities visited the school; students had individual appointments with the guidance teacher; and a company visited the school to conduct aptitude tests for all Grade 9 students. With a "cultural interest", she chose Geography "because it's a social science subject". As early as Grade 9 she knew she wanted to be a teacher; in Grade 11 her guidance teacher offered her a position as an assistant teacher at the school, which she took up straight after Grade 12.
Marope was influenced in choosing her FET subjects by her father, who was in IT. She therefore took "higher grade Maths and Science". Hotel Keeping & Catering she chose "for [her]self".
Matsephe went to a technical high school because the principal of that school had come to her primary school to recruit students. She therefore chose technical subjects for the FET phase by virtue of having chosen to attend a technical high school.
Lindiwe chose commercial subjects for the FET phase because she was "tired of doing Physics, Biology and Geography", because a teacher at the high school said she had the potential to take Business Economics, and because her older sister had also taken commercial subjects for the FET phase.
Amos chose to take: History, because a high school teacher claimed that "the past will remind you of the future"; Geography, because growing up on a farm stimulated an interest in physical Geography; and Business Administration, because he was "interested in owning [his] own business." His career guidance teacher was also influential, talking about "the subjects we liked and how we could achieve our goals with these subjects."
Ruth chose her FET subjects "out of interest". She was influenced in part by doing an online aptitude test at school at the end of Grade 9. She hated experiments, and so did not choose Science; but she loved Biology, fascinated by "how your body works". She chose Geography because she had a "brilliant" teacher. Geography is more interesting "if you have <i>seen</i> mountains, rivers, etc." She chose Accounting because she was good at it: "you either got it right or not".
Lerato chose a combination of commercial subjects (Accounting and Business Economics) and non-commercial subjects (Travel & Tourism and Geography) for the FET phase. She was influenced by her teachers, who persuaded her to go into Accounting. Her peers wanted her to go into Human Resources Management; most of them were interested in the monetary rewards in this field. Lerato helped her mother (a Grade R teacher) out in the classroom, and was told she had "a gift with teaching".
Siphiwe's parents wanted him to be a doctor; but he wanted to be an Engineer. So he chose technical subjects for the FET phase. As early as Grade 7 he was going to science EXPOs and entering science exhibition competitions. All of his school-friends who wanted to become doctors ended up studying medical technology at FET colleges, going the artisan route.
Moeketsi chose "science stream" subjects for the FET phase because "[he] had an interest in Maths and Science" and because the science stream "allowed versatility in terms of tertiary study." He also thought he could do anything; he "could always go to the commercial field if necessary." There was no career guidance at his school.
Tsephe wanted to be an Electrical Engineer on the recommendation of his aunt, so he chose technical subjects for the FET phase. His Biology teacher steered him into taking Electrical Work, Maths and Science.

Source: Author

Of the ten interviewees, seven were influenced by one or more teachers in choosing their FET subjects, only two of these teachers (Sarie's and Amos's) being career guidance, or Life Orientation, teachers. Teacher influence on choice of FET-phase subjects is clearly strong. And while we cannot compare this influence with that of teachers on students' choices of programme area for HE study, it is noteworthy that students in the 2008 data set rated the influence of teachers on HE programme choice only 1.7 on a five-point Likert-type scale in both 2006 and 2008.

Parental and / or family influence, on the other hand, does not appear to be as strong. Two interviewees (Marope and Lerato) were influenced in their choice of subjects by a parent, two by another relation (Lindiwe and Tsephe).

Subject choice is correlated to some extent with SES. Three of the six low-SES students (Matsephe, Sipiwe, Tsephe) chose technical or commercial subjects for the FET phase of schooling, while two of the three high-SES students (Marope and Moeketsi) chose academic subjects – Mathematics and Science. But five of the students' subject choices did not correlate perfectly with their SES.

Four of the interviewees – Ruth, Amos, Moeketsi, and Sarie – chose one or more of their subjects out of “interest” – the actual word used in their interviews. This confirms the importance of “interest” as a variable influencing choice of programme for HE study which we saw earlier in this chapter and gestures towards the achievement of epistemological access. But only Ruth chose *all* her FET-phase subjects “out of interest”. Neither school type (township versus suburban) nor SES seems to be highly correlated with “interest” as an influence on choice of FET-phase subjects – though of the four interviewees using the word, the only person from a low-SES background is Amos.

Finally, there may be tensions in the subject choice process – usually involving parents. Marope's father wanted her to take Mathematics and Science; she chose Hotel Keeping & Catering “for [her]self”. She wanted to become a hotelier, but ended up studying Commerce at university. Similarly, Sipiwe's father wanted him to become a doctor, but Sipiwe wanted to be an Engineer. He ended up studying Education with a view to becoming a teacher. For most of the interviewees, however, the choice of subjects did not involve conflict.

Higher education and career

Since it is difficult to separate learning programme and career choices, HE and career are thematically linked, and were illustrated in Figure 4.1 in Chapter 4 as constituting a single theme.

The choice of subjects made in Grade 9 for the remaining three years of high school constitutes the first step, or “branching point” (Boudon, 1974), in the trajectory of a student bound for HE. Choosing a programme of study for HE constitutes the second. Clearly the first branching point affects, if not determines, the second: students will be constrained in their choice of study direction in HE by the subjects, discrete and in combination, they took for their senior phase of high school – hence the heading of Table 6.4. Table 6.5 provides vignettes of the programme and career choice decision-making processes engaged in by the ten interviewees.

Table 6.5: HE programme and career choice decision-making processes of the ten interviewees

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND CAREER CHOICES AND THE INFLUENCES UPON THEM
Sarie knew in Grade 9 that she wanted to become a teacher. Her family life being so unpleasant, all she wanted to do was be at school. “The teachers became my parents,” she says. She was asked by her school guidance teacher in Grade 11 whether she would consider joining the staff as an assistant teacher straight after Grade 12. She needed the money, so accepted the offer. At the end of January 2006, however, when a Geography teacher left the school, she was offered the position of Grade 11 Geography teacher. She registered for one BEd module through distance learning in 2006. In December 2006 the principal asked her to teach Geography and English in 2007. She ended up teaching English at Grade 8 level, Social Science to Grade 9 students, and Geography to Grade 9 and Grade 10 students in 2007. She registered for seven BEd modules in 2007 and for 10 modules in 2008, continuing to teach at her high school throughout her studies.
Marope wanted to become a Hotelier, but the fees were unaffordable: the entire training fee had to be paid up-front. Her father therefore recommended that she get a degree first. Because three of her siblings had enrolled at the same university, she followed suit. She applied for a BCom and a BA, but ended up accepting an offer from the Commerce faculty despite an argument about whether she had sufficient points to enrol for a BCom. She wants to go into Marketing after qualifying with a BCom.
Matsephe went to Open Days at the university of her choice when she was in high school. She wanted to study Polymer Technology, but her marks were not good enough to get into the institution. She therefore enrolled at an FET College in 2006 to upgrade her Mathematics marks. Her re-application to the university of her choice was not successful, so she enrolled for a Diploma in Education at another university in 2007, despite having had no interest in teaching even after her high school English teacher had tried to persuade her to go into teaching. She wants ultimately to be an Education lecturer, preferably at the institution where she is now studying, but in the meantime will complete her education diploma and then teach Life Orientation and English “up to Grade 10” while studying further.
Lindiwe had to repeat Grade 11 because she suffered from depression, but finally achieved a school-leaving certificate, without university exemption. She initially wanted to go into Marketing, or into languages and communication. In the course of a walk-in registration at a university of technology in January 2006 she tried to enrol for a programme in Public Management, but discovered it was full; “I would have got it if I had applied earlier,” she says. After enrolling for and graduating with a Certificate in Management, she re-applied for Public Management at the same institution, but through a comedy of errors involving applying, the institution claiming to have lost her form, re-applying, and then never receiving the letter of acceptance, she did not get into the university of her choice. She then applied to another university, but was informed that “the courses were full”. She therefore “just left things”, and did not study in 2007, volunteering at a high school in August of that year as an administrative clerk. In January 2008 she enrolled for a three-year National Diploma in Public Management through distance learning. In March 2008 she applied to join the South African National Defence Force, as a trainee in Human Resources Management, and has provisionally been accepted for the January 2009 intake.
Amos wanted to enrol for an LLB at the university of his choice. He wanted to be able to represent employees in the workplace who had been unfairly treated: his own father had been unceremoniously retrenched from his truck-driver position on a farm by a “racist” some years previously. But since neither LLB nor Labour Law was offered by the university, Amos enrolled for a National Diploma in Labour Relations instead. His studies were “going well”, though he had failed a Labour Relations module in his first year, which he had to repeat in November 2008.
Ruth was shown, through an in-depth aptitude test conducted by a psychologist in Grade 12, that she could go into social work, script-writing and journalism, or business – “which showed the test was a waste of time”, since it managed to confuse her. Career guidance at school comprised visits from “many universities around the country”, in Grade 12 on a regular (fortnightly) basis. From Grade 10 to Grade 12, one week in the school year was devoted to community service; Ruth chose to do hospital visiting at a general hospital and to work at a clinic for mentally handicapped children. All through high school she and a group of friends also visited an AIDS home; she wanted “to give back, not just earn cash”. She was also required to undertake job shadowing; she shadowed chefs and management at a hotel, a journalist, and an accountant in a small accounting firm. In the course of her Grade 12 year she started speaking to family friends about career options; many of these friends were in jobs that overlapped with her interests. Ruth enrolled for a BA majoring in Geography and Sociology at the university of her choice in 2006, though she was “confused” as to which minor subjects to take. Her matric Geography teacher had instilled in her a love for the subject; “All the defined jobs never appealed to [her. She] was enjoying being fascinated by knowledge – and [she] knew [she] would find a job.” Though teaching was always an option for her – she chose to take teaching subjects at university as a fall-back

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME AND CAREER CHOICES AND THE INFLUENCES UPON THEM
option – “Education did not stimulate [her] brain”.
Lerato wanted to be a nurse when she was young; but as she grew up she realised she “could not do what they had to do (clean people, etc.).” On the strength of having been told that she had “a gift with teaching”, she registered in 2006 for a BEd through distance learning. Her mother funded the first year of her studies, but could not afford to fund her thereafter as the family had to take in her uncle’s children. Her uncle, the HR manager at a large engineering firm, arranged for her to undergo a training programme at the firm in looking after disadvantaged children. On the strength of this five-month programme, Lerato was recommended for an HR assistant position, which subsequently turned into a data capturing position. She plans to study via distance learning for the second year programme of her BEd in 2009 while continuing to work at the engineering firm; she will “keep [her] options open as to [her] future career”, which she will decide upon when she has her degree, in four or five years’ time.
Siphiwe wanted to “be hands-on doing engineering” when he chose his FET subjects in Grade 9 – though his parents wanted him to be a doctor. During his senior high school career he went to Open Days at the Geological Society of South Africa, where his interest in Geology was piqued. In Grade 12, however, he wanted to enrol for Mechanical Engineering at university so that he could design cars. A second option was Metallurgical Engineering, a third Geology. He was offered a place in a Foundation Programme in Geology at the university of his choice for 2006, and in 2007, partly on the strength of the influence of his brother’s friend (who now works for a large mining house), enrolled in mainstream Geology. He failed two subjects in his first year, picking them up in 2008. He plans to complete his degree in 2009 and then go on to Honours in 2010, work as a geologist for three years, and then return to the same university to enrol for a Masters degree. His ultimate goal is to become a mine manager.
Moeketsi enrolled at an FET College in 2006 to upgrade his marks in Biology and English with a view to going on to university. He “battled” to obtain a bursary to study what he wanted at university: Actuarial Science (his first choice); or Medicine (his second). In 2007 he enrolled for Medicine at university; but after a year he switched study direction, enrolling in Financial Mathematics at another institution. While his father had agreed to pay his tuition fees at this other university (Moeketsi had been on a NSFAS bursary at the first institution), Moeketsi “could not get proper residence”, so he had to commute daily from home to the second institution – which cost him R90 a day. He dropped out of university after the first semester. Though his father has a Certificate in Transport Management from the second institution and on that basis agreed initially to support his son’s move from the first university, his father did not ultimately agree with Moeketsi’s change of study direction. Since July 2008 Moeketsi has been trying to set up a job – start a small business in transport and logistics; he has always wanted to go into the trucking business. Moeketsi wants to continue with his studies, and “in the next few years ... will go back to Medicine” because of the family pressure (and accompanying financial support) to do so. This is his father’s choice for him, however; he would prefer to return to Financial Mathematics, seeing himself “managing big accounts of companies, or even government”.
Tsephe applied in 2005 to study Geology (first choice) and Electrical Engineering (second choice) at the university of technology of his choice, but “failed to go to the interview” in 2005. By 2006 there were no spaces left in these two areas; he could enrol in Office Management or Education. He chose Education, partly on the advice of a friend two years ahead of him who was studying IT and who said Education was broad enough for Tsephe to “do something other than teach”, partly because he saw Education “as an opportunity to fall into a stream of electrical technology”. Tsephe has decided to stay in Education, and even to do his Honours in it, since the salary “is better with an Honours”. He is planning to teach in a high school, despite the “pressure” occasioned by “the problems learners have – naughty, don’t have manners, don’t respect teachers”. Notwithstanding these pressures, “[he] has a passion for teaching”.

Source: Author

While there are various ways in which an analysis of these programme- and career choice vignettes might be approached, the analysis below focuses on three themes – continuity versus disconnection in programme- and career choice; career exposure; and goal-setting – and then considers the extent to which these themes collectively manifest congruence between aspirations and trajectories.

Continuity versus disconnection in aspirations, programme preferences, and enrolment decisions

The vignettes in Table 6.5 point up the extent of slippage between students' preferences for HE study programmes and the HE and career pathways they subsequently follow. A summary of the programme progression of these students underscores this disjunction:

- *Sarie* wanted to become **X** and became what she wanted, studying programme **A** (preparation for becoming **X**) as she worked in that field.
- *Ruth's* pre-HE battery of aptitude tests showed she could go into fields **X**, **Y** or **Z**. Confused, since none was her passion, she enrolled for **A** on the strength of her teacher-induced love for the subject. Ruth was fascinated by knowledge; interest in finding a job or entering a career was secondary.
- *Marope* wanted to become **X**, but the fees to study **A** – the prerequisite to becoming **X** – were unaffordable. She applied for programmes **B** and **C**, ending up enrolling in **B**.
- *Matsephe* wanted to study **A**, but her marks were not good enough. She repeated part of Grade 12 to enhance her HE eligibility. She applied to her chosen university to study **A** but was not accepted. She enrolled at another institution to study **B**, in which she had no interest.
- *Amos* wanted to study **A**. But neither **A** nor a cognate programme, **B**, was offered by the institution that would accept him. So he enrolled for cognate programme **C**.
- *Lerato* wanted to become **W** when young. But told in her teens that she had a gift for **X**, she enrolled for **A** (preparation for **X**) through distance learning. She completed her 1st year, but had no funding for the 2nd. A relative found her a job in his company. Recommended for job **Y**, she ended up working as **Z**.
- *Siphiwe* wanted in Grade 9 to become **X**, but his parents wanted him to become **Y**. He developed an interest in programme **A** (unrelated to **X** or **Y**) in the senior phase of high school. But in Grade 12 he wanted to enrol for programme **B**. He was offered a place in a Foundation Programme in programme **A**.
- *Moeketsi* wanted to study **A** or **B**. He enrolled for **B**, but after a year switched to **C** at another institution. He dropped out of university after the first semester because it was too expensive to commute. He tried to start a small business as **X** (unrelated to **A**, **B** or **C**). He would go back to **B** because of family pressure (and accompanying financial support), but would prefer to return to **C**.
- *Tsephe* applied to study **A** (first choice) and **B** (second choice) but missed the interviews in 2005. There were no spaces left in 2006 for these two programmes. He could enrol in **C** or **D**. He chose **D** on the understanding that he could go into **E**, a field cognate (but inferior) to **B**. He decided to stay in **D** and even to do further study in that area because of the superior remuneration prospects it held out.
- *Lindiwe* wanted to study **A** or **B**. She tried to enrol (via walk-in registration) for **C**, but discovered the programme was full. She enrolled for **D** and completed the course, then reapplied for **C**, but was not accepted. She applied to another institution, but the course was full. She did volunteer work for a year, then enrolled for **C** through distance learning. Three months later, she applied to join the military as a trainee in programme **E**.

These summarised vignettes are organised by complexity, from *Sarie's* programme pathway (the simplest) to *Lindiwe's* (the most complex). The gap between preferred programme and programme of enrolment (and often programme of re-enrolment) is smallest for *Sarie* and largest for *Lindiwe*. For *Sarie* there is no gap between her preferred programme of enrolment (**A**) and her actual programme of enrolment (**A**). *Lindiwe*, on the other hand, effectively enrolls for her fourth-choice

programme (**D**) after her third-choice programme (**C**) is full, then unsuccessfully reapplies for **C** at one institution, successfully reapplies for **C** at another institution, then drops out and applies to join the military as an enrollee in **E** – four steps removed from her preferred programmes **A** and **B**.

Only one of the ten students, Sarie, has a clear idea early on of what she wants to do with her life (teach) and follows the path that leads to that career. There is continuity, therefore, between her HE programme preference, her enrolment choices, and her subsequent career trajectory. Her pursuit of her childhood ideal is, however, highly unconventional: she is offered a job in and by her high school, and only subsequently chooses to enrol in a programme that will lead to qualification for a career in teaching. That job also represents an escape from her home life, a rebellion against her parents, and a determination to “break out of the poverty cycle” (*Interview with Sarie, 6 October 2008*). The only other student for whom there is no disconnect between her HE programme preference and the pathway she follows is Ruth; though unlike Sarie, Ruth does not have clarity about her future career, knowing only that her fascination with knowledge trumps, but will eventually lead to her, finding a job.

The remaining students act either on their second or third programme preferences, or fail to act at all. Marope’s hotelier dreams are dashed by financial considerations, so she enrolls for the BCom her father wants her to pursue. Matsephe’s hopes of becoming a polymer technologist are quashed by poor grades. Lindiwe shifts focus from Marketing to Public Management. Amos has to settle for a diploma in Labour Relations rather than a degree in Law. Siphwe’s interests shift between Mechanical Engineering, Metallurgical Engineering, and Geology. Moeketsi studies medicine when he would prefer to study Actuarial Science. Tsephe enrolls in an Education programme because his failure to attend an interview means he misses out on a place in the Geology programme. And Lerato has her career path decided for her by family.

For those having to pursue their second choice of programme or career, their degree of acceptance of that choice is a distinguishing feature. Marope, Matsephe, Amos, Siphwe, and Tsephe are largely accepting, however resignedly, of their choices. Moeketsi, however, is not: there is a clash between his dream of working with figures (as a financial expert) and his father’s dream of him working on bodies (as a medical expert).

A further noteworthy aspect of programme and career preference is the degree of perseverance evinced by students in achieving their goals – perseverance often against the odds. Sarie struggles to break free from a constricting and unhappy home life, achieving good grades at school and in her BEd programme and eventually achieving independence from her parents. Lindiwe manages to enrol in a Public Management programme despite two setbacks: lack of study places at two institutions; and being the victim of communication errors.

These examples reveal, collectively, that discontinuity between aspiration and programme preference on the one hand and enrolment choices on the other amongst these ten students is normative and that linear progression from school to HE with a clear idea of study and career direction is, at least in this small set of cases, exceptional.

Career exposure

The vignettes in Table 6.9 also point up the differences in exposure to career options. At the polar extremes, Moeketsi received no career guidance at school (*Interview with Moeketsi, 3 October 2008*), while Ruth was exposed to multiple forms of career guidance both at and outside school – from aptitude tests to university visits to institutionalised community service and job shadowing to discussions with family friends about different career options (*Interview with Ruth, 15 October 2008*).

Sometimes it is a family member who influences a student's choice behaviour (Marope and Lerato), sometimes a teacher (Sarie and Matsephe), sometimes a friend (Tsephe and Siphiwe). Where there is a strong singular (rather than multiple) influence, students are bound to have a narrower conception of career opportunities. This supports the British Cabinet's Social Exclusion Task Force finding (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008: 10), through qualitative research conducted among more than 150 professionals, parents and young people in three deprived communities in the UK, that "Many young people wanted to follow the life and career choices of the people around them. In some cases, their awareness of options appeared to be limited by *a lack of diverse role models*" (emphasis added). The net result of increased exposure to careers along the exposure continuum is not only a broader conception of career possibilities but a richer understanding of the world of work, which can only be beneficial in the longer term.

Goal setting

A further distinguishing characteristic in a reading of the vignettes in Table 6.9 is the extent to which students set and can articulate study and career goals for themselves. The spectrum here extends from:

- Those who have no medium- or long-term goals and who adopt a more-or-less fatalistic approach to their futures – the destinies of Sarie and Lerato appear to be decided by a combination of the steering of those close to them and the circumstances that befall them; to
- Those who have medium- but no long-term goals – Marope knows she wants to go into marketing but does not articulate a clear idea of what kind of job she wants; to
- Those who articulate short-, medium- and long-term goals and who have a very specific career trajectory in mind – Siphiwe wants to complete his Honours in Geology, work as a geologist for three years and return to university to enrol for his Masters degree, with a view in the longer term to becoming a mine manager.

The apparently resigned acceptance by Sarie and Lerato of their lot supports the finding of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (2008) that a sense of fatalism seems to discourage some young people from aiming high.

Congruence between aspirations, preferences, and trajectories

The three themes identified above – continuity versus disconnection between programme- and career preference, career exposure, and goal-setting – all point in different ways to the relationship between aspiration formation and trajectory manifestation. Since we do not know where the ten students ended up, we cannot measure the aspirations gap in terms of the gap between what career students aspired to and what they ultimately achieved – in the first place, a job along the career path they had identified for themselves. We can, however, measure the extent to which their aspirations to follow particular professional and / or programmatic pathways correlate with the pathways they ended up following, at least for three years (2006 to 2008) beyond high school. To this extent, the discussion here focuses on the first three phases of the four-phase conception of the HE student transition from school to the labour market:

Passage through school → Entry into HE → Passage through HE → Entry into the labour market

Again, there is a range of positions along a continuum – here, from congruity to incongruity. The pathways of Sarie, Amos and Ruth are consistent with their initial aspirations, albeit not exactly in the ways they might have imagined their trajectories unfolding. Sarie knew in Grade 9 that she wanted to be a teacher, but could not have foreseen that her high school would offer her a teaching position, which was subsequently bolstered by her enrolment in a BEd through distance learning. Amos knew early on that he wanted to go into Law to be able to take up his father's retrenchment case, but had to be content with "settling for less" (the title of the 2004 HSRC monograph by Cosser with Du Toit & Visser) through having to enrol for a National Diploma rather than a degree. Ruth's pathway through the social sciences, which was in line with her initial aspirations, unfolded organically without her having any clear sense of a job or profession – a situation with which she was entirely comfortable.

At the incongruity end of the continuum, the initial aspirations of the remaining seven students were not realised in their enrolment behaviour. For some, a clear preference for a specific programme of study or a career trajectory (Marope's for hotel-keeping, Matsephe's for polymer technology) failed to materialise, Marope's for financial reasons, Matsephe's for academic performance reasons. For others, lack of clarity regarding study direction (the uncertainty of Lindiwe about marketing versus languages / communication and of Tsephe about Geology versus Electrical Engineering) led to enrolment in a quite different programme (Lindiwe in Public Management, Tsephe in Education). For still others, lack of a definite choice of study direction (the vacillation of Siphwe between Mechanical Engineering, Metallurgical Engineering, and Geology and of Moeketsi between Actuarial Science and Medicine) issued in enrolment in one of the subjects of their vacillation.

Individual characteristics

The individual characteristics collectively displayed by the ten interviewees as depicted in Figure 4.1 in Chapter 4 both inform, and are informed by, the three levels considered so far: home; schooling; and HE and career. Some of the techniques of textual analysis practised by Fowler (1986) will be applied in this sub-section of the chapter to differentiate just two of the ten interviewees according to their individual characteristics. Before a consideration of the interview

transcripts, however, a brief explanation of the use of the term “world-view” in this analysis is needed.

World-view is the perspective from which – somewhat tautologically – one views the world and is determined by the language one has at one’s disposal to describe it. As Wales (1989: 481) puts it, “our **world-view**, i.e. our pattern of beliefs and cultural assumptions or IDEOLOGY, is constrained by the very language which apparently exists to express it” (emphasis original). Each of the ten students interviewed as part of the case studies therefore has her / his own particular way of viewing the world as encoded in the language she / he uses to express it.

In the analysis that follows, the world-views of two of the interviewees, Sarie and Ruth, are contrasted for the purposes of pointing up the relationships among world-view, language, and pathway.

Sarie’s story

Sarie’s discourse is pervaded by father-imagery, of a particular kind: the father as patriarch, embodied for her in God, in her own biological father, and in the principal of the high school at which she works. Indeed, her world-view appears to derive in large measure from her upbringing within the confines of a narrow Christian ideology. This much is clear from the various religious collocations in her interview transcription. When she achieves a distinction from a distance learning institution for a BEd module on “Learning strategies in the adolescent years”, Sarie says:

And out of that module – and I believe this was like a divine moment where it just showed me that I really need to be a teacher – for that one module that I did, a silly little learning strategy, I got a distinction, and based on that, just that one module, I applied for – and I just tried my luck – I applied for a bursary through NFAS [sic], the Funza Lushaka bursary, and I thought, you know, I am one in how many millions and it’s one module, there are many people who have passed ten modules and with much better marks than I, so I thought I won’t get it It was really a miracle (*Interview with Sarie, 6 October 2008*).

Sarie’s belief that she was predestined to become a teacher – “it just showed me that I really need to be a teacher” – and her interpretation of receiving a bursary as a “miracle” because her application was so unlikely to succeed resonate strongly with her Calvinist world-view. Later in her interview she explains why her parents want to “disown” her:

I go to a different church than what my parents go to ... I go to an English-speaking church, or an English church, my parents go to a strict traditional Afrikaans church, and I find a lot of support in this church where I go to regarding my studies, regarding my future plans (*Interview with Sarie, 6 October 2008*).

Along with allegiance to a Calvinistic God comes unconscious acceptance of authority and authority figures and unquestioning obedience to them. Consider the syntax and pronoun deployment in the following excerpt from Sarie’s transcript. Asked why she felt she had no choice when the principal of her high school approached her with a further job offer, she says:

Because I was, I can’t think of the English word now ... like you need the money, you need the money. I just agreed every time when *he said* “do this”. “Okay Meneer [Sir], then will

you pay me extra?” Yes, okay take on another subject, will you pay me more, almost it is, like, the more things *he gave me to do*, like, okay the more *we will give*, like – I can’t, I don’t know if you need to, if you want to note this down – it was almost like a blackmail thing for me, like if *you* teach this *we* will pay you more or if *you* do this for me *we – I’ll* – like, pay you so much money, and, like, *they* knew I couldn’t cope with the stress of work and of studies. So, I felt – and I still feel – like, that I was really being just not treated like *they* should have treated me. Because every time *they* offer me to teach another subject or doing something else like at school or another responsibility, I always told *them* that yes I will do it because I needed the money but then I also say *to them* just remember, I am also just a student and I am still studying and it is hard, saying don’t forget that. *They* just didn’t listen” (*Interview with Sarie, 6 October 2008; emphasis added*).

The clause “he said ‘do this’”, together with her addressing the principal as “Meneer” (“Sir”), sets the tone for the monologue, which is adversarial precisely because of the tension between Sarie’s recognition of an authority figure (the principal), who clearly has a hold over her that goes beyond the financial, and her desire to resist this hold. This tension is maintained throughout the excerpt through the binary nature of her personal pronoun usage: “we ... you”; “they ... I”.

The respect Sarie gives her employer-principal was first learned in the home, where there was “an internal conflict the whole time ... it was my parents, and honouring my parents, because I have been brought up in the belief that I must honour my parents [one of the Ten Commandments] although it was really forced upon me (*Interview with Sarie, 6 October 2008*).

How does Sarie’s world-view influence her career decisions? In speaking earlier about goal setting, we saw that Sarie is one of two students among the interviewees with a fatalistic approach to their futures – their destinies decided by a combination of the steering of those close to them and the circumstances that befall them. If Sarie subscribes to the notion of predestination – which her religious collocations suggest she does – then her world-view is essentially fatalistic, in that she cannot influence the course of events that shape her life. It is her destiny, therefore, that she is approached in Grade 11 with a job offer to become a teaching assistant at the school after matric. While there is an increasing tension between her and her parents with regard to her upbringing, her career choice, and the practice of her religion, manifested for example in her decision to break free from the hold her parents and high school have over her, that tension is a reflection of the fatalism / freedom-of-choice dichotomy that characterizes the Calvinism of her upbringing.

One way to alter one’s life trajectory, however, is through hard work. According to Tilgher (1930; cited in Hill, 1999), Calvin apparently held that “A person who was indifferent and displayed idleness was most certainly one of the damned; but a person who was active, austere, and hard-working gave evidence to himself and to others that he was one of God’s chosen ones.” It is therefore unsurprising that the word “work”, in this form or variants of it, occurs 65 times in Sarie’s discourse. Hard work signalled her initial intention to escape an oppressive home situation, and it is hard work – in effect, a Protestant Work Ethic – that is her *modus movendi*.

Ruth’s story

Ruth’s world-view is manifested in part through her lexicon. She uses “good” 22 times in her interview (“really good” twice), “enjoy” (or variants) 16 times, “interesting” (or variants) 10 times,

“fun” four times, and “fascinated” (or variants) thrice. Ruth also uses “work” (or variants) 23 times. Sarie also uses the word “good”, but only half as often as Ruth; but as we saw above, she refers to “work” (or variants) 65 times. The essential difference between Sarie’s and Ruth’s world-views is that while Sarie’s is informed by a strict Calvinist upbringing, Ruth’s arises from a liberal upbringing. While Sarie says of her parents, “I didn’t want to become like them”, and refers to her background as “dysfunctional” and “abusive” (*Interview with Sarie, 6 October 2008*), Ruth claims: “my parents gave me free choice [of high school to attend]” (*Interview with Ruth, 15 October 2008*).

Sarie uses the language of control:

I think teachers need to be *controlled*, someone from the government, someone needs to check out regularly on teachers because I feel that in a lot of schools that doesn’t happen But it is good that they [Funza Lushaka bursary administrators] have that high standard, then it also *controls* [who gets bursaries] I think there is a need [for home schooling], it is a trend. There is a lot of people these days home-schooling their children because of the condition in public schools ... because it is safer, they feel it is more *controlled* (*Interview with Sarie, 6 October 2008; emphasis added*).

Ruth, on the other hand, is expansive in her thinking and in her discourse:

I went to [University X] and I liked the *diversity* and you could see a *broad range of people* and [University X] has a way, like a society, and just – people are active, political, you could see that from the beginning; and there are *people doing a lot of stuff outside of just studying* I have realized that *you need a broader knowledge*, so I thought economics was important, because I was beginning to be interested in development studies (*Interview with Ruth, 15 October 2008; emphasis added*).

The speed at which Ruth talks (evident from the recording), and the way her mind flits from one topic to another, reinforces this sense at once of excitement and of possibility. The restrictiveness that characterises Sarie’s upbringing runs counter to the freedom of Ruth’s, for whom being in an all-girls’ school “is just like a freedom of being who you want to be” (*Interview with Ruth, 15 October 2008*). The only freedom for Sarie lies in her wanting to “break free” (she uses the expression twice) from her home environment.

These linguistic markers – control and breaking free versus freedom and breadth of vision – account in large measure for the different trajectories Sarie and Ruth follow. Sarie finds herself in her high school and chooses (however unwillingly) to remain there. Ruth has not found herself (she speaks often of being confused, in the context of her immediate future), but is comfortable with this uncertainty and open to the many possibilities that await her.

Ruth’s breadth of vision extends far beyond her contemplation of her immediate future. Her response to the question “What contribution do you hope to make to society over the next ten years?” is:

I haven’t figured it out yet, like I believe the world can run differently, that’s working with five people on the ground or it’s working on a much bigger scale, looking at world trade

policies like agricultural policies and realizing that lots of policies are totally skewed, are hugely skewed You can't do everything, you know; and challenging how things are currently run in the name of challenging the system of a few benefiting and masses suffering. Basically, in challenging these kinds of things, the objective is the whole notion of a couple of people benefiting ... (*Interview with Ruth, 15 October 2008*).

Inarticulate as this monologue appears to be, its lexicon (the collocations of global development – “world”; “policies ... skewed”; “challenging the system”) and its appreciation of scale (the juxtaposition of “people on the ground” with “much bigger scale” and of “a few benefitting” and “masses suffering”) bespeak an ability to look beyond the self, a sophisticated understanding of the world, and an empathy with humankind that epitomise the third student identity type identified by Cross et al. (2010): the student with a socially responsive identity who is motivated by altruism.

Exercise of choice by case study students

This section on the case studies of the ten students concludes with a brief examination of the responses of two of these students to the question probing their reasons for rating their ability to exercise choice in their life situations as they did.

In response to the 2006 survey question asking students to indicate the reason for their exercise of choice, Matsephe (whose rating was 4) answered: “I really didn't like my results, so I really had to upgrade” (Tracer study 1 database, 2006). Two years later her response to the same question (where her rating was 5) was:

First let me start by saying my parents are very open and easy to talk to they don't force you into something you don't love doing so my life situation is very good and I love it coz I found the good foundation, from my parents everything I'm currently doing is by my choice and I don't regret it thank you (Tracer Study 2 database, 2008).

So eager is Matsephe to get into HE that she repeats part of Grade 12 to improve her chances of accessing HE. She is not accepted for study in her preferred programme area at her chosen institution, so enrolls at another institution for a programme in which she has no interest. The institution and programme area in which she chooses to study are both one step removed from her original institutional and programmatic choices. Yet her qualitative response is gratitude to her parents for having given her freedom of choice.

Siphiwe, who rated his exercise of choice 4 in 2006, gave as the reason: “I am studying at an institution that I wanted to study at and studying towards the career I wanted” (Tracer study 1 database, 2006) In 2008, his reason for having rated his exercise of choice 5 was:

Because since I was growing up I always wanted to study at an institution, have a degree so that I can improve my current life situation I also believe that I am destined for bigger things (Tracer study 2 database, 2008).

His 2006 perspective – that he is studying towards his chosen career – downplays his enrolment in a Foundation Programme because it is a stepping-stone to the “bigger things” for which he believes in 2008 he is destined.

Summary of findings on higher education destinations in 2006 and 2008

Part One has shown that enrolments in 2008 were largely in line with expected distinctions in low- and high-SES student behaviour. While similar percentages of students were enrolled for University Professional 1st Bachelor's Degrees and for National Diplomas, the higher a student's SES, the more likely she / he was to have enrolled in the degree rather than the diploma programme. And while the profile of enrolments in programme areas at the aggregate level showed no clear pattern of enrolment in one broad type of science over another (natural, mathematical, engineering and health sciences versus the human and social sciences), the SES-disaggregated profile shows a clear divide: the higher a student's SES, the more likely he / she was to have enrolled in the natural, mathematical, engineering and health sciences, while the lower his / her SES, the more likely he / she was to have enrolled in Business / commerce and in the human and social sciences (except Education). The higher a student's SES, moreover, the more likely her / his enrolment decision was to have been influenced by interest in the field of study, job opportunities in South Africa after qualification in the field, job opportunities abroad, opportunities to use the resulting qualification in one's chosen profession, and opportunities to use the qualification in the field to contribute to development. Only the first two factors – interest in the field of study, and job opportunities in South Africa – were significant at the aggregate level, which suggests that high-SES students are in general more highly influenced in their programme choices than are their low-SES counterparts by a range of factors.

From an enrolment year perspective, we saw that nearly half of the students who registered for HE study in 2008 were enrolled in the same qualification in which they had been enrolled in 2006 and that fewer than a fifth of students had switched qualifications over the period. While those enrolled in the UPB could be expected to have been enrolled for a minimum of four years, the ND enrolment figure indicates that such students had either failed a year of the diploma programme and / or were on an extended programme. A disaggregation by SES showed a clear distinction between low- and high-SES students in terms of their qualification enrolment, low-SES students being strongly associated with enrolment in a ND, high-SES students with enrolment in a UPB.

From the investigation of the relationship between Grade 12 student preferences and student enrolments in 2006 and 2008 we saw that, amidst an extraordinarily large number of permutations, there was a large degree of consistency in student behaviour, the largest numbers of students having enrolled in 2006 and 2008 in the same programme area for which they had expressed a preference in 2005. Business / commerce and Engineering & other applied sciences proved to be the most heavily subscribed, not only in terms of consistency between preference in 2005 and enrolment in 2006 and 2008 but in terms of enrolment faithfulness to programme preference overall (whether students enrolled in this programme in both years or not). Nearly two-thirds of students enrolled in the same programme area in 2008 as in 2006, moreover; and while this is to be expected in the case of students enrolled for the UPB degree, which is notionally a four-year programme, it is not to be expected in the case of students enrolled in the ND, which is notionally only a two-year programme. The high student enrolment in the ND in 2006 and 2008 reveals just how many students either failed, stopped out (that is, did not enrol in 2007 but re-enrolled in the ND in 2008), or were on extended programmes.

We saw also from the preference-enrolment investigation that the majority of students who had not indicated a programme preference in 2005 enrolled in a Business / commerce programme in 2006 and / or 2008, but that Engineering & other applied sciences was the least subscribed programme area for students who had not indicated an enrolment preference in 2005. This profile accords with the association of Business / commerce with low-SES student enrolment and of Engineering & other applied sciences with high-SES student enrolment observed in Chapter 5.

The section considering the exercise of choice of students who had participated in the 2008 tracer survey revealed that HE students felt that they had been able to exercise greater choice than did their non-HE counterparts. At the same time there was little distinction between low- and high-SES students enrolled in HE institutions in 2008 in terms of their exercise of choice over their life situations. From the analysis of the reasons students provided for their exercise of choice we observed, notwithstanding the cumulative profile built up from those who rated their exercise of choice 3 to those who rated it 5, characteristics peculiar to students who rated their exercise of choice 3 versus 4 versus 5. Students rating their exercise of choice 3 showed a penchant for turning the negative into the positive and for turning adversity into success. Those who rated the exercise of choice 4 actually used the word (or its variations) “positive” often, demonstrated a future orientation (as opposed to dwelling on the past or present), portrayed a sense of realism, showed congruity between their aspirations and their current life situations, and asserted independence of their parents and other influences. Those who rated the exercise of choice 5 showed an even stronger congruity between their aspirations and present realities, recognised in some instances the pathways they had followed and on which they were still headed, and took ownership of their life situations.

From the investigation of the ten student cases we saw that the HE-career vignettes illustrate most clearly the decision-making behaviour of the students. Only one of the students (Sarie) had a long-term goal in mind (teaching), the other nine working it out as they went along – acting on their second or third HE programme choices or not at all. The factors influencing this behaviour ranged from poor marks to programme vacillation to failure to attend an interview to parental decision-making. A couple of the students (Sarie and Lerato) persevered against the odds despite the poor start they had had in life.

Career guidance was seen to take various forms – a family member, a teacher, a friend. In all instances, the narrower the sphere of influence the narrower the student’s conception of career opportunities – which leads to the conclusion that the broader students’ exposure to different sources of career information the more likely they are to make informed choices and, given the paucity of long-term goal setting observed among the ten interviewees, to set career goals.

The notion of agency emerges from the vignettes as a key distinguishing feature underpinning student behaviour. The spectrum extends from those whose destinies are apparently decided by a combination of the steering of those close to them and the circumstances that befall them to those who are in control of their own destinies, whether their socio-economic backgrounds had predicted such behaviour or not. Ray’s (2006) concept of the aspirations gap – interpreted for this thesis as the gap between what students aspire to and the extent to which their destinations are aligned with their aspirations – provides a useful frame for analysing student trajectories, the extent of congruity

between aspirations and destinations determining the size of the aspirations gap. As we saw, the aspiration gap of only three of the ten students was small, signalling greater (though not perfect) congruity between aspirations and destinations.

Finally, the comparison of the life histories of two interviewees drew on textual analysis to distinguish the world-views of the subjects of analysis, revealing a dichotomy between constriction, control and solipsism on the one hand and freedom, expansiveness and social conscience on the other.

PART TWO: HIGHER EDUCATION PATHWAYS OF STUDENTS IN THE 2005 GRADE 12 COHORT, 2006-2010

While Part One of this chapter focussed on the HE destinations of the 2005 cohort of students in 2006 and 2008, using the tracer surveys of 2006 and 2008 as data sources, the second part considers the passage through HE of students in the same cohort (2005) whose identities could be linked to those of students in the HEMIS database. The advantage of this approach is twofold: it increases the number of students in the sample; and it expands the timeframe within which their passage through HE is followed. The disadvantage is that it does not allow for an analysis of the factors influencing student progression. Nevertheless, Part Two provides, from a systemic perspective, a means of describing with greater precision than did Part One the types of pathways pursued and the (non-) completion patterns manifested by students.

Table 6.6 indicates the HE pathways of the 2005 Grade 12 cohort of students between 2006 and 2010, showing how many students entered, proceeded through, and exited the HE system.

Table 6.6: Student pathways through HE, 2006-2010, by SES, in descending order by total

Pathway pattern #	Pathway pattern	Students pursuing pathway							
		Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	12270	57	7.0	30	7.0	23	6.5	110	6.9
2	10000	54	6.6	34	8.0	14	4.0	102	6.4
3	12222	31	3.8	34	8.0	26	7.3	91	5.7
4	01222	29	3.6	12	2.8	12	3.4	53	3.3
5	12000	30	3.7	17	4.0	5	1.4	52	3.3
6	00001	29	3.6	12	2.8	9	2.5	50	3.1
7	01000	30	3.7	11	2.6	9	2.5	50	3.1
8	12227	21	2.6	16	3.8	13	3.7	50	3.1
9	01227	26	3.2	17	4.0	3	0.8	46	2.9
10	12700	17	2.1	16	3.8	9	2.5	42	2.6
11	12220	18	2.2	9	2.1	9	2.5	36	2.3
12	12200	20	2.5	4	0.9	11	3.1	35	2.2
13	00122	18	2.2	7	1.6	5	1.4	30	1.9
14	00012	15	1.8	9	2.1	1	0.3	25	1.6
15	15222	12	1.5	5	1.2	7	2.0	24	1.5
16	1271/70	10	1.2	6	1.4	6	1.7	22	1.4
17	00100	13	1.6	5	1.2	2	0.6	20	1.3

Pathway pattern #	Pathway pattern	Students pursuing pathway							
		Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
18	01200	13	1.6	4	0.9	1	0.3	18	1.1
19	15227	12	1.5	0	0.0	4	1.1	16	1.0
20	00522	9	1.1	2	0.5	2	0.6	13	0.8
21	01270	11	1.4	2	0.5	0	0.0	13	0.8
22	1275/70	5	0.6	5	1.2	3	0.8	13	0.8
23	01220	10	1.2	1	0.2	1	0.3	12	0.8
24	01522	8	1.0	4	0.9	0	0.0	12	0.8
25	15270	6	0.7	1	0.2	5	1.4	12	0.8
26	12757	0	0.0	6	1.4	5	1.4	11	0.7
27	12271/7	3	0.4	4	0.9	4	1.1	11	0.7
28	00010	7	0.9	3	0.7	0	0.0	10	0.6
29	05222	4	0.5	3	0.7	3	0.8	10	0.6
30	12271	7	0.9	0	0.0	3	0.8	10	0.6
31	11222	7	0.9	0	0.0	2	0.6	9	0.6
32	12252	4	0.5	3	0.7	2	0.6	9	0.6
33	15220	6	0.7	0	0.0	3	0.8	9	0.6
34	1271/75	5	0.6	2	0.5	2	0.6	9	0.6
35	00120	6	0.7	2	0.5	0	0.0	8	0.5
36	01275	7	0.9	1	0.2	0	0.0	8	0.5
37	12275	3	0.4	3	0.7	2	0.6	8	0.5
38	12752	3	0.4	1	0.2	4	1.1	8	0.5
39	15000	5	0.6	2	0.5	1	0.3	8	0.5
40	12122	3	0.4	2	0.5	2	0.6	7	0.4
41	12276	4	0.5	1	0.2	2	0.6	7	0.4
42	12522	3	0.4	1	0.2	3	0.8	7	0.4
43	12710	2	0.2	2	0.5	3	0.8	7	0.4
44	15700	5	0.6	1	0.2	1	0.3	7	0.4
45	16222	1	0.1	2	0.5	4	1.1	7	0.4
46	00005	4	0.5	2	0.5	0	0.0	6	0.4
47	00127	5	0.6	0	0.0	1	0.3	6	0.4
48	00152	5	0.6	1	0.2	0	0.0	6	0.4
49	01252	1	0.1	3	0.7	2	0.6	6	0.4
59	10012	5	0.6	1	0.2	0	0.0	6	0.4
51	10122	5	0.6	0	0.0	1	0.3	6	0.4
52	11227	1	0.1	1	0.2	4	1.1	6	0.4
Sub-total		615	75.6	310	72.8	234	66.1	1,159	72.7
<i>Other pathways¹</i>		<i>199</i>	<i>24.4</i>	<i>116</i>	<i>27.2</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>33.9</i>	<i>435</i>	<i>27.3</i>
Total		814	100.0	426	100.0	354	100.0	1,594	100.0

Source: Author, derived from HEMIS

Key:

1. Pathway codes: 0 = Not enrolled (in that particular year), 1 = First-time entering (institution, or new institution and new programme), 2 = Continuing (in the same programme for which previously registered), 5 = Entering (a programme not previously registered for), 6 = Transferred from a different institution and registered for the same or for a different programme, 7 = Completed
2. The symbol “/” signifies that a student enrolled in and completed a new programme in the course of the same year. Thus, in the table, students who pursued the 1271/70 pathway (combination # 18) enrolled for the first

¹ Pursued by fewer than 6 students each. A cut-off of 6 students was selected for convenience of reporting (the majority of pathways – 198 of the 340 – were pursued by only 1 student). See Appendix 2 for the full data-set.

time in 2006, continued in the same programme in 2007, completed the same programme in 2008, enrolled in and completed (1/7) a new (postgraduate) programme in 2009, and did not re-register in 2010.

Each of the five digits of the five-digit code in Table 6.6 indicates a student's main activity in each of the five years under investigation (2006 through 2010). In other words, the first digit indicates the student's destination in 2006, the second the student's destination in 2007, and so forth. So, for example, the code 12227 means that the student enrolled in a HE institution in 2006, continued in the same programme in 2007, 2008, and 2009, and successfully completed that programme in 2010. While Robinson's (2004) data were drawn from a notional five-year programme commencing for all students enrolled in the same year, the data in Table 6.6 are not: the pathway code of a student who entered HE in 2007, for example, will therefore begin not with a 1 – which would signify first-time entry in 2006 – but with a 0, signifying that the student was not enrolled in 2006. Similarly, the code for the pathway of a student who enrolled in 2006 and completed a programme in four years would read 12270.

From Table 6.6 and Appendix 2 we can make the following five observations at the aggregate level.

First, 162 of the 340 pathways (48 per cent) involve completion, accounting for the pathways of 39 per cent of students. This means the majority of students (61 per cent) had not completed within the five-year period (2006-2010).

Second, of those who completed, most achieved their first qualification in 4 years (40 per cent of those who completed), followed by those who completed in 3 years (30 per cent), then 5 years (27 per cent), then 2 years (3 per cent), and then 1 year (less than 1 per cent). But these figures are merely indicative: they need to be pegged to the type and notional length of programme if they are to be meaningful. Table 6.7 presents the outcome of a cross-tabulation of SES, year of entry into HE, and notional length of study programme to indicate the number of students in the sample who could have completed the study programmes for which they enrolled.

Table 6.7: Students able to complete study programmes within the five-year timeframe, by SES

SES	Students able to complete		Students not able to complete		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Low	732	91.5	68	8.5	800	100.0
Middle	388	93.3	28	6.7	416	100.0
High	324	93.6	22	6.4	346	100.0
Total	1444	92.4	118	7.6	1562	100.0

Source: Author

As Table 6.7 reveals, a staggering 92 per cent of students could have completed the study programme for which they enrolled within the five-year timeframe. The percentages of students within all three SES categories who could have completed, moreover, are very similar. Yet only 39 per cent of students completed – pointing up the high failure and drop-out rates amongst students in the South African HE system.

The third point concerns the timing of students' first entry into HE. Of the entire cohort of 1,594 students, 66 per cent entered HE for the first time in 2006, 20 per cent entered HE in 2007, 7 per cent in 2008, 3 per cent in 2009, and 4 per cent in 2010. Two-thirds of the 2005 Grade 12 cohort who could be matched to a HE institution via their ID numbers and whose SES could be calculated from parental education and income information provided therefore proceeded directly from school to HE the next year. Of the 738 students who completed their qualification programme, 82 per cent went straight from school in 2005 into HE in 2006, 16 per cent entered HE in 2007, 2 per cent in 2008, and none in 2009 or 2010. Thus only 18 per cent of students who completed a qualification programme entered HE between 2007 and 2010. Of those who did not graduate in the five years (971 students), 56 per cent entered HE in 2006, 23 per cent in 2007, 10 per cent in 2008, 5 per cent in 2009, and 6 per cent in 2010.

The presentation of these statistics (in the third point) leads inevitably, however, to a tautological conclusion: **the later a student enters HE between two fixed dates, the less likely s/he is to graduate in that time-frame.** If we consider the number of graduates as a proportion of first-time-entering students in each of the five years (2006-2010), the following picture (Table 6.8) emerges:

Table 6.8: Percentage completion of students in the 2005 Grade 12 cohort who entered HE between 2006 and 2010

Year	Students entering (n)	Students completing, 2006-2010 (n)	% completion
2006	1,056	513	48.6
2007	318	98	30.8
2008	110	11	10.0
2009	49	1	2.0
2010	61	0	0
Total	1,594	623	39.1

Source: Author

While just under half of all students who entered HE in 2006 completed, fewer than a third of students who entered HE in 2007 completed, the percentages of those completing declining – *as one might expect* – steadily from 2006 to 2010. The completion rate of those who entered HE in 2006 or 2007 (1,374 students) is 44 per cent. In other words, fewer than half of the students who could have been expected to complete in four or three years – the two periods of time, respectively, in which the highest percentage of students completed – actually did so.

Fourth, the five commonest pathways (Table 6.1) are as follows:

1. Qualification in four years, with first-time-entry in 2006.
2. First-time-entry in 2006, but with no re-enrolment. This pathway implies student drop-out, though theoretically all students who did not attain a qualification in the five-year period could have re-enrolled in subsequent years and completed (institutional rules permitting, that is).
3. Five-year enrolment in the same programme, but without completion.
4. Four years of enrolment with first-time-entry in 2007 and non-completion.

5. First-time-entry in 2006, with one year of re-enrolment in 2007 and non-completion. Again, students following this pathway could theoretically have re-enrolled after 2010 and completed (institutional rules permitting, that is).

These pathways account for 26 per cent of all students represented in the data-set. Since the real significance of the findings lies in the analysis of the entire cohort of students' pathways, however, one should not set too much store by the extent of subscription to the five commonest trajectories – except to say that, despite assertions that the linear trajectory of entering HE straight after school and being retained in the system until qualification completion is the exception rather than the rule, the profile indicates that more students followed this route than any other – however low the completion rate.

Fifth, the incidence of apparent drop-out is worth noting. Of those students who entered HE in 2006, 6 per cent did not re-register between 2007 and 2010. Of those who entered in 2007, 3 per cent did not re-register in 2008, 2009, or 2010. Of those who entered in 2008, 1 per cent did not re-register in 2009 or 2010. And of those who entered in 2009, less than 1 per cent did not re-register in 2010. Theoretically, then, 11 per cent of the total could have dropped out between 2007 and 2010.

This calculation assumes, however, that all these students dropped out rather than stopped out. Stopping out means a student appears to have dropped out but subsequently re-enters HE at a later stage, whether such re-enrolment is planned or not; hence the use of the term “apparent dropout” above. While stopout may be a possibility for students who were not in the system in 2009 or 2010, it seems unlikely for those who left the system after 2006 but before 2008 or after 2007 but before 2009. Nevertheless, the notion of stopout is worth investigating.

Indeed, there appear, from the full data-set (see Appendix 2), to be many instances of stopout. These are summarised in Table 6.12.

Table 6.9: Stopout-related pathways of students who were in Grade 12 in 2005 and who entered the HE system between 2006 and 2010

Pathway combination	Pathways (n)	Students (n)
Pathways involving stopout of 1 year	40	62
Pathways involving stopout of 2 years	10	16
Pathways involving stopout of 3 years	2	3
Pathways involving stopout followed by completion (immediate or eventual)	5	6

Source: Author

While 81 students (across 52 pathways) stopped out over the five-year period, however, this number represents only 5 per cent of the total. The percentage of students stopping out who completed is only 7 per cent of those who stopped out and a paltry 0.4 per cent of the total number of students in the response profile (1,594); and since only 1 per cent of those who completed did so via a stopping-out pathway, we conclude that students who completed qualifications almost without exception studied uninterruptedly.

Shifting the focus to the SES-disaggregated level, we can make four observations from Table 6.1. First, the rank order of the top ten pathways pursued by students from different socio-economic backgrounds differs, but only slightly, as Table 6.10 reveals. (Corresponding colours in the table highlight the positions of the same pathways in each SES category.)

Table 6.10: Top ten pathways of students from low, middle and high socio-economic backgrounds

Pathway #	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES	
	Pathway pattern	%	Pathway pattern	%	Pathway pattern	%
1	12270	7.0	10000	8.0	12222	7.3
2	10000	6.6	12222	8.0	12270	6.5
3	12222	3.8	12270	7.0	10000	4.0
4	12000	3.7	12000	4.0	12227	3.7
5	01000	3.7	01227	4.0	01222	3.4
6	01222	3.6	12227	3.8	12200	3.1
7	00001	3.6	12700	3.8	00001	2.5
8	01227	3.2	01222	2.8	01000	2.5
9	12227	2.6	00001	2.8	12700	2.5
10	12200	2.5	01000	2.6	12220	2.5
Total		40.3		46.8		38.0

Source: Author

The percentages do not differ markedly among the three SES categories, the top ten pathways of low-SES students having been pursued by only a slightly higher percentage of students (40 per cent) than were the top ten pathways of high-SES students (38 per cent). The use of colour highlights this, only one pathway (12220) – the lighter of the two blues – not appearing in at least one other column. Very similar percentages of students (7 per cent each of low- and middle-SES students and 6 per cent of high-SES students) pursued the most popular pathway, 12270 (see Table 6.1). In other words, SES is not a distinguishing feature among students who entered HE immediately after school, studied continuously, and took four years to achieve their first qualification.

SES is a distinguishing feature, however, among those students who entered HE immediately after school and dropped out after one year (pathway 10000): while 7 per cent of low-SES and 8 per cent of middle-SES students pursued this pathway, only 4 per cent of high-SES students did so. Students who stayed one more year before dropping out (pathway 12000) are similarly better represented among low- and middle-SES students (both 4 per cent) than among high-SES students – who do not even feature in the top ten most popular pathways of high-SES students, only 1 per cent of them (see Table 6.1) having followed this pathway.

Second, completion versus non-completion would appear, from Table 6.1, not to be a differentiating dialectic among students from different socio-economic backgrounds; 13 per cent of low-SES students, 19 per cent of middle-SES students, and 13 per cent of high-SES students pursued pathways that culminated in qualification attainment. If we factor Appendix 2 into the calculation, however, a very different picture emerges: 36 per cent of low-SES, 40 per cent of middle-SES, and 47 per cent of high-SES students followed pathways issuing in qualification completion. In other

words, SES is a progressively distinguishing factor in qualification completion as one moves from low- to high-SES.

As we saw earlier, at the aggregate level only 39 per cent of students achieved a qualification over the 2006-2010 period. The corollary of the above SES-disaggregated picture, then, is that of the 61 per cent of students who failed to complete a qualification, nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) of low-SES students, three-fifths (60 per cent) of middle-SES students, and just over half (54 per cent) of high-SES students did not complete a qualification.

Third, the profile of students who were able to switch programmes in the course of their studies (students with a 5 in their pathway pattern) shows that 201 of the 340 (or 59 per cent) of the pathways involved programme transfer (within the same institution) and that 28 per cent of low- and of middle-SES students and 34 per cent of high-SES students switched programmes in the course of their studies. The largest percentage of students, then – at the aggregate level, 29 per cent across the three SES categories – did not switch programmes during their studies. The percentage of programme-switching pathways pursued (59 per cent) does, however, demonstrate student ability to transfer from one course of study to another over the period.

If we differentiate programme-switching pathways on the basis of those leading to qualification attainment versus those that do not, however, we see that while 13 per cent of low-SES students and 14 per cent of middle-SES students who switched programmes at some point in their studies completed a qualification, 21 per cent of high-SES students did so. The aggregate was 15 per cent. The ability to switch programmes, indeed, is only important if such switching leads to programme completion; on this measure, only a small percentage of students overall (15 per cent) successfully switched programmes, while only 13 per cent of low-SES students were in this category.

A typology of higher education pathways

From the technical description and attendant analysis of student pathways in the previous section we are able to develop a conceptual typology. In other words, we can discern and describe certain patterns of student mobility that begin to show typical behaviour in the South African HE system. The following diagram (Figure 6.1) illustrates the elements of such a typology.

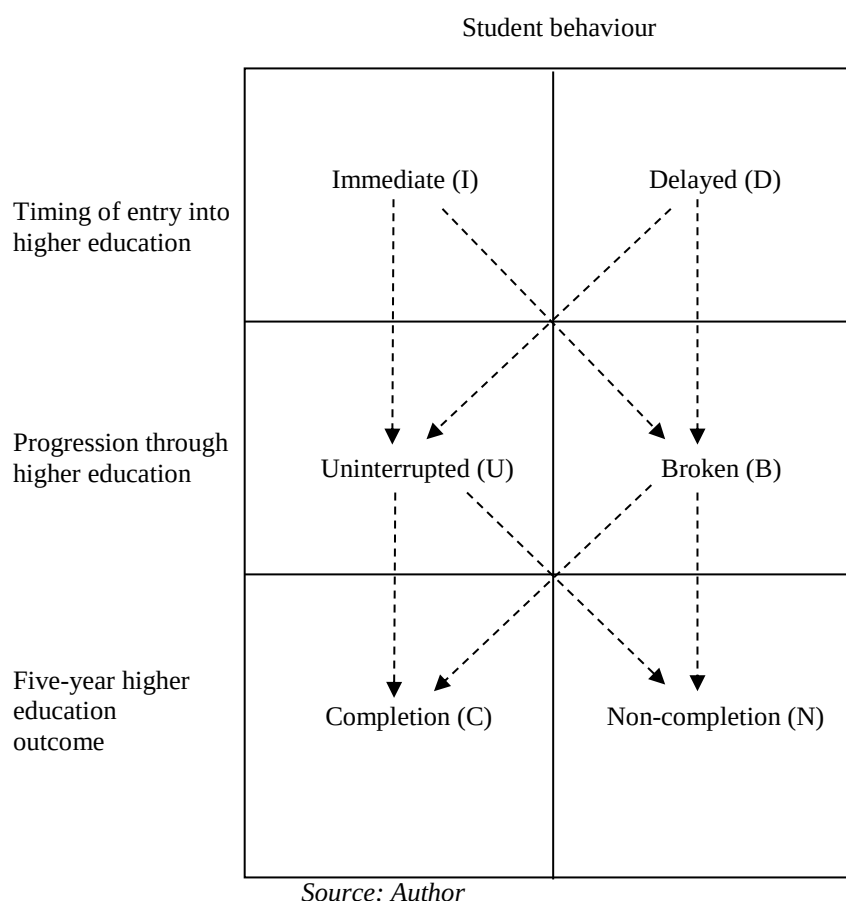


Figure 6.1: Conceptual mapping of student choice behaviour in higher education

The diagram reflects the entirety of behavioural pathways, illustrated by the eight arrows between the six squares and coded according to the abbreviations for the six behaviours:

1. Entry into HE is immediate, progress is uninterrupted, five-year outcome is completion (IUC)
2. Entry into HE is immediate, progress is uninterrupted, five-year outcome is non-completion (IUN)
3. Entry into HE is immediate, progress is broken,² five-year outcome is completion (IBC)
4. Entry into HE is immediate, progress is broken, five-year outcome is non-completion (IBN)
5. Entry into HE is delayed, progress is uninterrupted, five-year outcome is completion (DUC)
6. Entry into HE is delayed, progress is uninterrupted, five-year outcome is non-completion (DUN)
7. Entry into HE is delayed, progress is broken, five-year outcome is completion (DBC); and
8. Entry into HE is delayed, progress is broken, five-year outcome is non-completion (DBN).

² Broken refers to the pathways both of students who stop out of the system (leave for a period and then return within the five-year period) and of students who appear to drop out of the system – that is, are not registered for one or more years after leaving HE and who therefore do not complete.

A ninth behaviour is not a pathway but a type nevertheless, comprising students who entered HE in the final year of the period under investigation (D) and whose progression and completion status were therefore unknown.

Dividing the population of students in the cohort (Table 6.1 and Appendix 2) into these eight behavioural pathways and one non-pathway creates the distribution in Table 6.11.

Table 6.11: Pathway types of students into, through and out of higher education, 2006-2010, in descending order by total number and percentage of students and by SES of students following pathway

Pathway type	Students pursuing pathway							
	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
IUC	219	26.9	140	32.9	151	42.7	510	32.0
IBN	157	19.3	84	19.7	55	15.5	296	18.6
IUN	107	13.1	68	16.0	69	19.5	244	15.3
DUN	112	13.8	54	12.7	36	10.2	202	12.7
DBN	109	13.4	37	8.7	19	5.4	165	10.4
DUC	69	8.5	29	6.8	12	3.4	110	6.9
D	37	4.5	14	3.3	10	2.8	61	3.8
IBC	4	0.5	0	0	2	0.6	6	0.4
DBC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	814	100.0	426	100.0	354	100.0	1,594	100.0

Source: Author

At the aggregate level, we see that fewer than one-third of students pursued a traditional, linear pathway (IUC) into, through and out of HE that issued in completion within five years of their leaving school. A third of the cohort of students (34 per cent) entered HE straight after school and either had their studies interrupted or appeared to drop out of HE (IBN – 19 per cent) or studied uninterruptedly until the end of 2010 and also failed to graduate (IUN – 15 per cent).

Delayed entry into HE is fairly common: a third of the cohort entered HE at least one year after leaving school. Four per cent of students, remarkably, entered HE in 2010, five years after leaving school. Even more remarkably, while 32 per cent of students who proceeded straight from school to HE ended up completing, only 7 per cent of students who delayed their entry into HE completed within five years of leaving school – even though those who entered HE in 2007 to pursue a four-year programme and those who entered HE in 2008 to pursue a three-year programme could theoretically have completed in the required time. No students who delayed their entry into HE and whose studies were interrupted in the course of the five-year period, moreover, ended up completing. This, together with the finding that fewer than 1 per cent of students who entered HE immediately after school and whose studies were interrupted in the course of the five-year period eventually completed (IBC), confirms the observation at the end of the previous section that students who graduate from a HE institution almost without exception study uninterruptedly.

At the level of SES, we see that there is a steady gradation in the percentages of students from the three SES categories pursuing the IUC pathway – from 27 per cent of low-SES students to 33 per cent of middle-SES students to 43 per cent of high-SES students. While an average of 32 per cent of

students across the three SES categories followed the IUC pathway, the percentage of high-SES students doing so is proportionately much higher, at 43 per cent. In other words, students who enter HE immediately after school and proceed uninterruptedly through the system, achieving a qualification in the process, are more likely to come from high-SES than from middle- and low-SES backgrounds.

At the same time, however, there is a steady (but much smaller) gradation in the percentages of students from the three SES categories pursuing the IUN pathway – from 13 per cent of low-SES students to 16 per cent of middle-SES students to 20 per cent of high-SES students. One-fifth of high-SES students, then, proceeded uninterruptedly through the HE system straight after school but without achieving a qualification.

High-SES students are much less likely than their middle- and low-SES counterparts to delay entry into HE. While more than three-quarters (78 per cent) of high-SES students proceeded directly to HE after school, 69 per cent of middle-SES students and only 60 per cent of low-SES students did so.

A negligible percentage of students from all three socio-economic backgrounds who proceeded to HE immediately after school and whose studies were interrupted during the five-year period (that is, students following the IBC pathway) completed a qualification.

Summary of findings on passage through HE between 2006 and 2010

The data presented in Part Two of the chapter have shown that the sheer diversity of pathways (340 different pathways were distinguished) is a feature of South African student passage through HE. That only 1,594 students pursued these pathways, however, reveals that the majority (three out of five pathways) were pursued by only one student each; indeed, a quarter of students pursued just five pathways (12270, 10000, 12222, 01222, and 12000). Only two out of five students, the findings show, completed qualifications.

The profile reveals also that the majority of students – two-thirds of the 2005 Grade 12 cohort who could be matched to a HE institution via their ID numbers and whose SES could be calculated from information provided – proceeded directly from school to HE the next year. *As is to be expected*, the percentages of those who completed declined dramatically over the five-year period (82 per cent of those completing had entered HE in 2006, 16 per cent in 2007, 2 per cent in 2008, and none in 2009 or 2010). Since the majority of students (66 per cent) had proceeded directly to HE after Grade 12, however, and 86 per cent had entered HE by 2007, the correlation between completion and time of entry into HE is weak – fewer than half of the students who could have been expected to complete in four or three years (the two periods of time, respectively, in which the highest percentage of students completed) having completed.

The data showed also that the phenomenon of stopout, while present in the profile, is not as common in the South African student experience as might have been expected: only 5 per cent of students stopped out over the five-year period. The percentage of “stop-outs” who completed, moreover, was less than 1 per cent of the total of 1,594 in the profile. This, together with the finding

that only 1 per cent of students who completed had pursued a stopout pathway, reveals that students who complete qualifications almost without exception study uninterruptedly.

From the perspective of SES, there were three notable differences in the pathways of students from low, middle, and high socio-economic backgrounds. First, low-SES students were more likely to drop out after the first or second year of study (11 per cent) than were high-SES students (5 per cent). Second, high-SES students were more likely to pursue a pathway issuing in completion – 47 per cent of high-SES versus 36 per cent of low-SES students. And third, not only was the extent of programme switching that eventually issued in a qualification relatively low (15 per cent) at the aggregate level, but high-SES students were more likely than their low-SES counterparts (21 per cent versus 13 per cent) to complete after changing programme direction.

The creation and population of a typology to describe student mobility through the HE system confirms the findings of the model presented in Table 6.1 at the aggregate level, but is particularly useful in pointing up distinctions at the SES level. The data in the populated typology showed that students who entered HE immediately after school and proceeded uninterruptedly through the system, achieving a qualification in the process, were more likely to come from high-SES than from middle- and low-SES backgrounds. Counterbalancing this, however, is the finding that a fifth of high-SES students – compared to only one-eighth of low-SES students – proceeded uninterruptedly through the HE system straight after school (the IUN type) without achieving a qualification. Finally, we saw that high-SES students were much less likely than their middle- and low-SES counterparts to delay entry into HE – indicating that continuous learning in the transition from school to HE is positively correlated with high socio-economic status.

CHAPTER 7 – PROFESSIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND WORK AND LIFE EXPECTATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Chapters 5 and 6 dealt, respectively, with the first two phases of student progression from school into and through HE: the transition phase and the passage phase. This chapter focuses on the post-HE aspiration and expectation phase – student aspiration for the future, as measured by professional aspirations (that is, aspirations to enter particular professions after qualification), and students' expectations about work and life and about the social conditions in which they will live and work.

While the first two phases were concerned with the journey, anticipated and realised, from school into and through HE, the third phase is concerned with the journey of the mind. How students from different socio-economic backgrounds imagine their transition from HE to the world of work and from youth to adulthood is every much a part of the narrative of this thesis as are their responses to their lived HE experience. The perceived freedom to choose one's pathway beyond HE into the world of work is a measure of the extent to which the NQF has enabled students from low socio-economic backgrounds, the majority of whom are previously disadvantaged, to embrace the work and life opportunities purportedly offered to them by the promulgation of the SAQA Act (RSA, 1995).

There are two parts to this chapter. Part One considers the professional aspirations of the 2005 cohort, both in 2006 (for those who were enrolled in HE institutions in that year) and in 2008. It distinguishes among students from different socio-economic backgrounds in terms of their perceptions about the factors that influenced their choice of profession. Part Two compares low-, middle- and high-SES students from the perspective of their views about their future work situations, their life situations – work and family – ten years' hence, and the likely social situation in South Africa in 2015. The views are those of students who were enrolled in HE institutions in 2008 *expressed in 2005 when they were still at school*.

PART ONE: PROFESSIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Table 7.1 outlines students' preferred professions after qualification. A number of students indicated that they would enter a profession "other" than those listed in the questionnaire. An analysis of these "professions", however, reveals that they are *industries* or *occupations* rather than professions.³ Given the large number of students indicating preferences for an industry or occupation, however, industries / occupations are included in the list of "professions" for the purposes of this analysis.

Though the table is long, it is necessary, given the need to disaggregate and analyse the data by SES, to present it in its entirety, including even those combinations of 2006 and 2008 choice of

³ A *profession* is conceived of as a body that is regulated by a council or board, subscribes to a code of ethical practice, licenses its members to practice, and unites a group of professionals working in the same area. (The exception to the professions definition in the list provided in the questionnaire is "clerical".)

profession exemplified by one student only (49 combinations in total). The table includes the responses of all students in the original 2005 sample who were enrolled in HE institutions in 2008, whether they were enrolled in HE in 2006 or not.

Table 7.1: Professions students want to enter after their studies, 2006 and 2008, by SES, in descending order by total

#	Preferred profession, 2006	Preferred profession, 2008	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Accounting	Accounting	17	15.2	4	18.2	2	16.7	23	15.8
2	Engineering	Engineering	14	12.5	1	4.5	1	8.3	16	11.0
3	Medical	Medical	6	5.4	2	9.1	1	8.3	9	6.2
4	NI	Accounting	6	5.4			1	8.3	7	4.8
5	NI	Engineering	4	3.6	1	4.5			5	3.4
6	NI	Teaching	3	2.7	2	9.1			5	3.4
7	NI	NI	2	1.8	2	9.1			4	2.7
8	Legal	Legal	3	2.7			1	8.3	4	2.7
9	Social Work	Social work	3	2.7					3	2.1
10	NI	Legal	3	2.7					3	2.1
11	NI	Social work	2	1.8					2	1.4
12	Hospitality	Hospitality	1	0.9	1	4.5			2	1.4
13	NI	Transport & Logistics	2	1.8					2	1.4
14	Teaching	Academic	1	0.9	1	4.5			2	1.4
15	Public Relations	Public relations	1	0.9	1	4.5			2	1.4
16	Teaching	Teaching	1	0.9			1	8.3	2	1.4
17	NI	Medical			1	4.5	1	8.3	2	1.4
18	Military	Unsure	2	1.8					2	1.4
19	Medical	Other	2	1.8					2	1.4
20	Accounting	Teaching	1	0.9					1	0.7
21	NI	Nursing	1	0.9					1	0.7
22	Other	Public Relations	1	0.9					1	0.7
23	Accounting	NI	1	0.9					1	0.7
24	NI	Tourism	1	0.9					1	0.7
25	Performing Arts	Performing Arts					1	8.3	1	0.7
26	Other	Economics	1	0.9					1	0.7
27	Photography	Photography	1	0.9					1	0.7
28	NI	Beauty	1	0.9					1	0.7
29	Engineering	Tourism	1	0.9					1	0.7
30	Translation & Interpreting	Translation & Interpreting	1	0.9					1	0.7
31	NI	Business	1	0.9					1	0.7
32	Medical	Actuarial science					1	8.3	1	0.7
33	Legal	Accounting	1	0.9					1	0.7
34	Economics	Economics	1	0.9					1	0.7
35	Engineering	Business	1	0.9					1	0.7
36	Social Work	Clerical			1	4.5			1	0.7
37	Tourism	Social work	1	0.9					1	0.7
38	Accounting	Academic	1	0.9					1	0.7

#	Preferred profession, 2006	Preferred profession, 2008	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
39	Public Relations	NI	1	0.9					1	0.7
40	Economics	Unsure	1	0.9					1	0.7
41	Legal	Policing	1	0.9					1	0.7
42	IT	IT	1	0.9					1	0.7
43	Engineering	NI			1	4.5			1	0.7
44	NI	Other					1	8.3	1	0.7
45	Architectural	Military	1	0.9					1	0.7
46	Military	Marketing			1	4.5			1	0.7
47	NI	International Relations	1	0.9					1	0.7
48	Academic	Banking	1	0.9					1	0.7
49	NI	Clerical	1	0.9					1	0.7
50	Legal	Academic	1	0.9					1	0.7
51	IT	Engineering			1	4.5			1	0.7
52	Dental	Unsure	1	0.9					1	0.7
53	Technology	IT			1	4.5			1	0.7
54	NI	Banking	1	0.9					1	0.7
55	Psychological Services	Psychological services	1	0.9					1	0.7
56	Economics	Engineering			1	4.5			1	0.7
57	Engineering	IT					1	8.3	1	0.7
58	Other	Other	1	0.9					1	0.7
59	NI	Unsure	1	0.9					1	0.7
60	NI	Academic	1	0.9					1	0.7
61	Clerical	Social work	1	0.9					1	0.7
62	Marketing	NI	1	0.9					1	0.7
63	Business	Human Resources	1	0.9					1	0.7
64	Military	Nursing	1	0.9					1	0.7
65	Editing	Public relations	1	0.9					1	0.7
66	Other	Accounting	1	0.9					1	0.7
67	Policing	Unsure	1	0.9					1	0.7
68	NI	Spiritual ministry	1	0.9					1	0.7
Total			112	100.0	22	100.0	12	100.0	146	100.0

Source: Author

We can make three main observations from this table at the aggregate level. First, those students whose choice of profession was consistent across the period (excluding students who did not indicate a choice of profession or who indicated “Other” without specifying which profession) constitute 46 per cent of the total. Accounting and Engineering are the two most sought-after professions among those students whose choices were consistent between 2006 and 2008, these two professions making up 27 per cent of choices. Second, 16 per cent of students who were enrolled in 2006 and 2008 changed their minds over the period about the professions they wanted to enter. And third, only 4 per cent of students who were enrolled in 2006 and 2008 had a profession in mind in 2006 but were no longer certain about their choice by 2008.

If we combine the professional choices indicated in 2006 and / or 2008, where applicable, taking the choice indicated in 2008 as definitive, the top seven professions students planned to enter (professions subscribed to by three or more students) are illustrated in Table 7.2. Four students did not indicate a choice of profession in either year.

Table 7.2: Top seven choices of profession of students in 2006 and 2008, in descending order by frequency

Profession	n	%
Accounting	33	22.6
Engineering	24	16.4
Medical	11	7.5
Teaching	8	5.5
Legal	7	4.8
Social work	7	4.8
IT	3	2.1
<i>Remaining professions</i>	45	30.8
<i>Unsure</i>	6	4.1
<i>Not indicated</i>	2	1.4
Total	146	100.0

Source: Author

Consistent with the enrolment profile, Accounting and Engineering account for the choices of profession of the highest percentages of students: 39 per cent of students want to become engineers or accountants. Interestingly, a slightly higher percentage of students want to become teachers (6 per cent) than lawyers or social workers – which does *not* correlate with enrolment choices.

At the SES-disaggregated level, notwithstanding the very low numbers involved – which indicate that the findings should be treated with caution – we can make the following observations from Table 7.1. First, very similar percentages of low- and high-SES students wanted to enter the Accounting profession (15 per cent versus 17 per cent). A higher percentage of low- than of high-SES students, however, wanted to enter the Engineering profession. Second, while 46 per cent of low-SES students wanted in 2006 and 2008 to enter the same profession, 58 per cent of students were in this category; and while 14 per cent of low-SES students changed their minds between the two years, 17 per cent of high-SES students did so. And third, the same percentage of low- as of high-SES students – 33 per cent – wanted to enter one of the top three most sought-after professions – Accounting, Engineering, or the Medical profession.

Correlation between qualification, programme, and profession

Having ascertained what qualifications the 2008 cohort of students enrolled for, which programmes they enrolled in, and what professions they planned to enter after qualifying, we can ascertain the extent of correlation between these three variables. This will reveal the degree of variance in the profile of student trajectories between 2006 and 2008.

A comparison of the correlation between qualification, programme and profession where the profession may be at any occupational level within the field of endeavour within which the

profession is located and the correlation between qualification, programme and profession where the profession is at the highest occupational level within the field of endeavour within which the profession is located reveals the following. While there is a correlation for 112 of the 146 students between qualification, programme and choice of profession at any qualification level – that is, an 82 per cent match – there is a correlation for only 61 (59 per cent) of the students at the highest occupational level. It is the type of qualification enrolled for – for instance, UPB versus a ND – that makes the difference.

By way of example, a student enrolled for a ND in Engineering who wanted to enter the engineering profession would not be able to become a Professional Engineer unless s/he subsequently took a degree in engineering, but might become an engineering technician. A student enrolled for a UPB in Engineering who wanted to become a Professional Engineer, on the other hand, would be able to do so after a two-year stint in the field practising as an engineer and then passing the Professional Engineer examinations.

The import of this is that those students indicating that they wanted to enter the Engineering or Accountancy professions may have aspired to be (Professional) Engineers or (Chartered) Accountants, but depending on their qualifications and the programme areas they were enrolled in, may not have been able to realise these aspirations.

A disaggregation of these findings by SES reveals that while there was a correlation at the highest occupational level for 48 per cent of low-SES students for whom there was a match between qualification, programme of enrolment, and choice of profession, there was a correlation at the highest occupational level for 73 per cent of high-SES students.

Factors influencing choice of profession

The results of an analysis of the factors influencing students' choice of profession in 2008 are contained in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3: Factors influencing students' choice of profession, by SES, 2008, in descending order by total

Variable	Low-SES		Middle-SES		High-SES		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
A passion for the profession	4.2	.976	4.6	.796	4.4	.669	4.3	.934
The certainty of finding a job in this profession	4.2	.983	4.0	1.133	4.1	1.379	4.2	1.039
Wanting to make a difference to the lives of all South Africans through working in the profession	3.7	1.269	3.9	1.019	3.1	1.621	3.7	1.273
The amount of money to be made in this profession	3.4	1.384	3.5	1.471	3.9	1.379	3.5	1.394
The flexible life-style which working in this profession will give you	3.4	1.320	3.3	1.555	3.3	1.723	3.4	1.386
The status that the profession has in the community	3.3	1.402	3.2	1.602	3.9	1.311	3.4	1.428
Wanting to enter the profession since you were young	3.1	1.448	3.2	1.445	3.3	1.775	3.1	1.468
Your choice of subjects for the Senior Certificate having naturally led you	3.1	1.478	3.2	1.402	3.2	1.467	3.1	1.455

Variable	Low-SES		Middle-SES		High-SES		Total	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
into this profession								
Wanting to enter the profession because of the influence of a teacher in your school	2.3	1.299	1.7	1.077	1.8	1.055	2.2	1.264
This profession being the only career option open to you in the circumstances in which you find yourself	2.0	1.390	2.5	1.625	1.8	1.545	2.0	1.449
Family members / relatives having entered this profession	1.6	1.070	1.7	1.386	1.7	1.371	1.6	1.145
Not knowing what else to do with your life	1.3	.656	1.4	.790	1.1	.289	1.3	.656

Source: Author

At the aggregate level, the top three influences here correlate well with the findings regarding the effect of variables on students' enrolment patterns, where interest in the field of study, jobs, and societal contribution played an influential role in their decision-making.

As in the case of student enrolments, a disaggregation by SES reveals some differences between low- and high-SES students in terms of the factors affecting their choices of profession. High-SES students are more passionate about the profession they want to enter than are their low-SES counterparts (4.4 versus 4.2)⁴ and are driven far more by money (3.9 versus 3.4) and status (3.9 versus 3.3) – in a self-perpetuating way, perhaps, their higher SES having afforded them a resource-rich lifestyle, which has shown them the relative value of money. They are, however, much less influenced than are low-SES students (3.1 versus 3.7) by the prospect of making a difference to their compatriots.

Summary of findings in Part One

In Part One we saw that nearly half of the students in the cohort – those students who were enrolled in HE institutions in 2008 – were consistent in their choice of profession between 2006 and 2008. This in itself suggests a fairly high degree of single-mindedness. Accounting and Engineering made up just over a quarter of the choices of those whose preference was consistent across the period; but if we include choice of profession in 2006 or 2008, taking the 2008 choice as final where indicated, two out of five students wanted to become Accountants or Engineers. High-SES students were more likely than their low-SES counterparts to have shown consistency in their choice of profession. But there was no distinction between high- and low-SES students in terms of consistency of choice of either the Accounting, Engineering or Medical professions. In short, there is little to choose between low- and high-SES students in terms of their preferred professions.

Where there is a notable difference between low- and high-SES students, however, is in their qualification-programme-profession combinations. Since high-SES students are more likely to have enrolled for degree rather than diploma programmes, there is a 73 per cent correlation for them between qualification, programme and profession at the highest occupational level, while for low-SES students the correlation at the highest occupational level is only 48 per cent. In other words,

⁴ While a 0.1 difference between variables is not statistically significant, a 0.2 difference is significant.

high-SES students are far more inclined towards entering professions at the highest level (for example, Professional Engineer or Chartered Accountant) than are their low-SES counterparts.

The findings also revealed differences between high- and low-SES students in terms of their rating of influences upon their choice of profession. High-SES students were both more passionate about their choices – suggesting appropriation of the internal goods of the practice through affinity with the profession – and more driven by money and status – suggesting, paradoxically, greater ascription to external reward; they were also less influenced than were low-SES students by the notion of making a difference to the lives of others.

PART TWO: PERSPECTIVES ON FUTURE WORK AND LIFE IN SOUTH AFRICA

The focus shifts, in Part Two, to the imagined work and life destinations of the cohort beyond HE. Three aspects of this scenario-envisioning are considered here: the factors students consider important in a future job; the likely living and working situations of students in 2015; and students' views about key social indicators in 2015. As indicated earlier, the views reflected here are those of students in 2005 who were enrolled in HE institutions in 2008

Importance of job characteristics

The first issue concerns student's views about specified aspects of their future work situations. These are indicated in Table 7.4. The survey question was: "How important is it to have a job which ...".

Table 7.4: Importance for students enrolled in HE institutions in 2008 of having a future job characterised by listed variables, by SES, 2005

Variable	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES	Total
Is in line with your interests?	4.8	4.7	4.9	4.8
Uses your skills?	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.7
Gives you independence?	4.6	4.3	4.8	4.6
Allows you to help other people?	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.5
Gives you job security?	4.4	4.6	4.1	4.4
Enables you to earn lots of money?	4.4	4.3	4.5	4.4
Allows you to work where you want to?	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.4
Is useful to society?	4.6	4.4	4.4	4.4
Allows you to work as part of a team?	4.0	4.1	3.5	4.0
Gives you status ?	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.9
Allows you to work when you want to?	3.3	3.0	3.5	3.2
Allows you to work close to home?	3.3	3.0	3.5	3.2

Source: Author

At the aggregate level, we see that a number of the influential variables – job-interest alignment, assisting others, remuneration prospects, usefulness to society – align in terms of influence with the

variables that affected students' choice of programme for HE study (Chapter 6) and profession (above).

At the SES-disaggregated level, the first observation is that 8 of the 9 scores for variables for which the total is 4.0 or above are themselves scored 4.0 or above – indicating the high degree of influence of almost all the variables in the table.

Second, there are clear distinctions among students from different socio-economic backgrounds in terms of their rating of the influence of a number of variables. High-SES students are more influenced than are their low-SES counterparts by the notion of a job providing independence (4.8 versus 4.6) and allowing one to work where one wants to (4.6 versus 4.4). On the other hand, low-SES students are more influenced than are their high-SES counterparts by a job which allows one to help others (4.5 versus 4.3), provides job security (4.4 versus 4.1), is useful to society (4.6 versus 4.4), allows one to work as part of a team (4.0 versus 3.5), and gives one status (4.0 versus 3.8) – this last influence reversing the finding above about the status of a particular profession in the community (3.9 for high- versus 3.3 for low-SES students).

Future work and life situation

The probability of students' work and life situations being characterised by specified descriptors – the question posed in the survey was “How likely is it that the following will describe your situation ten years from now?” – is captured in Table 7.5.

Table 7.5: Likelihood of variables describing situations of students enrolled in HE institutions in 2008 ten years' hence, by SES, 2005

Variable	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES	Total
Working in a satisfying occupation	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.7
Being part of the senior management of a company / organization	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.1
Studying towards a higher qualification	4.0	3.8	3.8	3.9
Being your own boss	3.9	3.5	4.3	3.9
Running your own business and employing other people	3.9	3.0	4.2	3.8
Being part of the middle management of a company / organization	3.8	3.3	3.3	3.7
Married, with children	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.4
Living and working overseas	3.4	2.7	4.1	3.3

Source: Author

The scores at the aggregate level are rather lower, on average, than those for the characteristics of a future job outlined in Table 7.4, where no fewer than nine variables were rated 4.0 or above. Part of the reason for this may be the relative importance ascribed to work and study versus home life. Table 7.4 revolved around future work situations, while all the most influential variables in Table 7.5 are concerned with the same orientation; marital and parental status is not deemed important (3.4). Students' responses are also likely to be age-appropriate: 18-year-olds are unlikely to project themselves into a situation beyond school, further learning and career in which, at age 28, they may well be married and rearing a family.

Work satisfaction emerges as extremely important for students at all SES levels, though it is more influential for low- than for high-SES students. The likelihood of studying further is also greater for low- than for high-SES students. But the greatest differences between low- and high-SES students are evident in the career aspirations of the two groups. High-SES students are much more influenced than are their low-SES counterparts by the prospect of being one's own boss (4.3 versus 3.9), running one's own business and employing others (4.2 versus 3.9), and living and working overseas (4.1 versus 3.4). The first two of these are strongly indicative of entrepreneurship.

Future social conditions

The views in 2005 of the 146 students enrolled in HE institutions in 2008 for whom SES was calculable regarding key social conditions in South Africa in 2015 are captured in Table 7.6.

Table 7.6: Attitudes of students enrolled in HE institutions in 2008 towards major social issues ten years' hence, 2005

Variable	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES	Total
There will be greater opportunities for people to go to higher education	4.1	3.7	3.1	4.0
(My) children will receive good quality public education in South Africa	4.1	3.6	2.9	3.9
My family and I will receive good quality public health care in South Africa	4.1	3.6	3.3	3.9
The teaching of maths and science in schools will be greatly improved	4.0	3.6	3.4	3.9
Public higher education institutions will provide a world-class education	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.8
Poverty in South Africa will be greatly reduced	3.5	3.1	3.3	3.4
The crime situation in South Africa will have improved	3.2	3.2	2.8	3.1
HIV/AIDS will be under control in South Africa	3.1	2.9	2.6	3.0

Source: Author

While the scores overall are lower than those for job characteristics and work and life situations, five of the eight variables score above 3.5. Students are largely positive about public education and healthcare; uppermost in their minds are HE opportunities for the next generation. Rather less highly rated is the likelihood of poverty, crime and HIV/AIDS being under control in South Africa.

All the variables above 3.5, however, are important for low-SES students, only marginally so for middle-SES students, and not at all for high-SES students – on a sliding scale. Low- and high-SES students are clearly strongly divided on the issues of public provision of good-quality education and health care. The greatest divide is on the issue of good quality public education, where the scores are 4.1 for low-SES students and 2.9 for high-SES students. High-SES students are largely unconvinced that there will be greater opportunities for young people to access HE (3.1 for high- versus 4.1 for low-SES students) and are hardly more positive about the provision of good quality public healthcare (3.3 for high- versus 4.1 for low-SES students). The views of low- and high-SES students are only marginally closer on the issue of improved mathematics and science teaching in schools (4.0 for low-SES and 3.4 for high-SES students); and even in their views on public HE

institutions providing a world-class education the two groups are far apart (3.9 for low-SES versus 3.5 for high-SES students).

Summary of findings in Part Two

In Part Two we saw huge optimism about the world of work and about job characteristics – an optimism that is aligned with the most influential factors affecting choice of programme of study observed in Chapter 6: having an interest in the job; assisting others; being useful to society – all indicative of engagement with the internal goods of a practice – and making money – an external reward. Students from all three socio-economic backgrounds were strongly influenced by the top nine factors, the only exception being high-SES students' lukewarm response to teamwork. This exception is consistent with the high-SES student penchant for a job that provides independence and flexibility in terms of work space.

The table illustrating students' attitudes towards their work and life situations ten years' hence reinforces the independence of high-SES students: they are more influenced than are their low-SES counterparts by the notion of working for themselves and employing others, while low-SES students are more drawn to being satisfied employees enjoying job security and banking on the prospect of further learning opportunities.

This tension between independence and teamwork is epitomised in the table reporting on students' attitudes to major social issues ten years later. Low- and high-SES students are strongly differentiated in their views on public education and healthcare, these phenomena registering the largest differences in scores for all scale questions investigated in the study. The high-SES student orientation towards independence observed earlier is aligned here with a strong inclination, by implication, towards the private: while low-SES students are strongly optimistic about the ability of the public sector to provide good quality education, educational opportunities, and healthcare, high-SES students are sceptical of this notion. Collectively, the three tables in Part Two of the chapter depict a clear divide between low- and high-SES students on the basis of community and a public orientation versus independence and a private orientation.

CHAPTER 8 – DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

The foregoing three chapters have presented findings on student transition from school to HE (Chapter 5), progression through HE (Chapter 6), and aspirations for and expectations of future work and life in South Africa (Chapter 7). The present chapter considers the extent to which student entry into HE, passage through HE, and aspiration-expectation congruence have been realised in the pathways of students from low socio-economic backgrounds compared to students from high socio-economic backgrounds.

There are seven sections to the chapter. The first considers the implications of the findings regarding the transition from school to HE. The second considers the findings on student progression through HE in relation to the pathway typologies conceptualised in Chapter 3 and Chapter 6 and the five-year pathway model developed in Chapter 6. The third considers pathways in terms of student capacity for exercising choice and for self-regulation and -correction of subsequent behaviour. The fourth considers the manifestations of the appropriation of the internal goods of a practice (MacIntyre, 1981) and of the acquisition of epistemological access to a programme of study (Morrow, 1993) in the discourse of selected students. The fifth considers the extent of students' awareness in relation to their journeys from HE aspiration at school to imagined life and work beyond HE. The sixth considers the implications of the relationship between HE access, redress and success for student pathways. And the seventh considers the extent to which the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) can be supposed to have facilitated the access, progression and mobility of students from low socio-economic backgrounds into and through HE.

ASPIRATION FOR AND TRANSITION TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Chapter 5 considered students' aspirations to proceed to HE and to study in particular fields from, first, a racial and, second, a socio-economic perspective.

We saw a mixed profile of racial distinctions in the first part of Chapter 5, which summarised the work on the Student pathways project undertaken by the author at the HSRC (and which is analysed extensively in Cosser, 2009 and Cosser & Sehlola, 2009). Black African and coloured Grade 12 students showed a preference for study at FET colleges, white students for universities. White students favoured degrees at universities, black African students favoured certificates and diplomas, particularly at former technikons. And black Africans preferred to study in the natural and engineering sciences and in Business / commerce, white students in the health, human and social sciences, including education. These findings suggest that some apartheid thinking eleven years into democracy had been perpetuated in the HE aspirations and preferences of Grade 12 students. Black African student propensity for National Diploma (ND) preference would seem to perpetuate, possibly in a self-fulfilling way, the Verwoerdian dumbing down of the black African population (as epitomised in the Bantu Education Act, 1953 – Union of South Africa, 1953). By contrast, however, black African student desire to study in the area of the Natural & mathematical sciences stands almost in defiance of the Verwoerdian argument against black African study of Mathematics

epitomised in the oft-quoted “There is no place for [the Bantu] in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour What is the use of teaching the Bantu child mathematics when it [*sic*] cannot use it in practice?” (Clark & Worger, 2004: 48). On balance, the findings suggest that the shackles of previous disadvantage are both retained and broken in the HE aspirations and preferences of Grade 12 students.

The shift in the demographic unit of analysis from race to SES in the consideration of the translation of aspirations and programme preferences into enrolments was deliberate. While notionally the architects of the NQF would have had race uppermost in their minds as the salient marker of redress, SES, as argued in Chapter 4, provides a more appropriate means of distinguishing students on the grounds of (dis)advantage, particularly given the role of parental income in the calculation of the SES variable. The majority of low-SES students in 2005 would have been black African; this much is largely a function of the representation (four-fifths) of black Africans in the general population. And – the corollary – there will have been a small proportion of white students, a slightly larger proportion of Indian / Asian students, and an even larger proportion of coloured students amongst the ranks of the low- and middle-SES student population. But the race-SES distinctions are large enough to justify the use of SES as the unit of disaggregation.

As indicated in Chapter 4, however, the shift from race to SES as disaggregating marker is not intended to suggest that the two variables are interchangeable. The use of SES in the second part of Chapter 5, and henceforth throughout the present study, registers a decisive break from the use of race in Cosser (2009) and Cosser & Sehlola (2009).

SES appears to have impacted strongly on the gap between programme *preference* in Grade 12 and area of programme enrolment in the first year of HE. That low-SES students were significantly less likely than their high-SES counterparts to have enrolled in the programme area of their choice – especially those who enrolled in Business / commerce or in the Natural & mathematical sciences – suggests a lack of realism in the aspirations of low-SES students that bears out Ray’s (2006) notion of the aspirations gap: the distance between aspirations and their realisation. The gap appears to be much larger for low-SES than for high-SES students, suggesting that they are more out of touch with the reality that their aspirations may not be achievable.

MODELS OF STUDENT ACCESS TO AND PROGRESSION THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

This section of the chapter considers the implications of the different typologies and model developed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 6 to account for the pathways of students as they accessed HE and progressed through and out of the HE system between 2006 and 2010.

The typology developed in Chapter 3 to provide a theoretical framework within which the pathways of students into, through and out of the HE system might be conceptualised was characterised by ten pathways, the first one not into HE but into some other avenue, the other nine pathways into, through and out of HE. In Chapter 6 we saw the development of a model for illustrating student progression along HE pathways between 2006 and 2010. The model demonstrated the annual

progression of students through the HE system over a five-year period, showing when students entered the system, whether they pursued the same pathway or switched programme to another pathway, whether they dropped out or stopped out, whether they switched institutions and enrolled in another or the same programme, and whether or not they completed a programme of study. While the focus was on completion of a first programme, the model by definition also accommodated enrolment in and completion (or not) of subsequent programmes within the five-year period.

Derived from the five-year model, the typology in Chapter 6, based on three binary pairs – timing of entry to HE being immediate / delayed (I/D); progress through HE being uninterrupted / broken (U/B), and five-year outcome being completion / non-completion (C/N) – allowed for nine possible student pathways. The typology overlaps significantly with that proposed in Chapter 3; but there are four key differences. First, the typology in Chapter 6 assumes institutional access – thereby excluding Pathway 1 in the typology developed in Chapter 3. Second, since the HEMIS database does not include a field on chosen programme and since the focus in the typology in Chapter 6 is on student progression through the HE system and on study programmes, the emphasis in the Chapter 6 typology is on programme loyalty versus shifts in programme enrolment, not on comparisons between students' chosen programmes and the programmes in which they enrolled. Third, while the theoretical framework distinguishes between dropout and completion, the typology in Chapter 6 introduces the progression variable (uninterrupted versus broken study), allowing for a more nuanced reading of dropout to include the possibility of stopout. And fourth, the typology in Chapter 6 introduces the temporal dimension: *when* students entered the system, whether and *for how long* they stopped out of the system, *how long* they were retained in the system, and *how long* it took those who completed a programme to do so.

The explanation of the differences between the typology in Chapter 3 and the model and typology developed in Chapter 6 should not, however, be interpreted as an attempt to gloss over the key distinction (the second difference between the theoretical framework typology and the Chapter 6 typology outlined above) between chosen programme and programme in which enrolled – key, since it has implications for the formal-epistemological access differentiation made by Morrow (1993). The issue of programme choice is picked up in the third section of the present chapter, which considers students' perceived exercise of choice over the passage of their transition to and progression through HE and homes in on the sub-set of the ten students selected for the case studies.

Conclusions from the five-year model and resulting typology

Whether we are considering the five-year model developed in Chapter 6 or the nine-pathway typology derived from the model, the findings tend towards three broad conclusions. These are the following.

First, only 39 per cent of students in the cohort of 2005 completed a qualification programme within the 2006 to 2010 period – notwithstanding the facts that: a) the vast majority (85 per cent) entered HE in 2006 or 2007; and that b) the majority of students who completed (76 per cent) did so in three or four years. An overwhelmingly large majority of students (92 per cent on average) could

have completed their study programmes within the five-year timeframe. All things being equal, a far larger percentage of students should have completed a qualification programme, therefore, than did.

A comparison with official completion rates reveals that an estimated 44 per cent of students in the South African system who first enrolled in 2000 eventually went on to complete (CHE, 2009). A more recent CHE study (2013), however, calculates the five-year completion rates (that is, graduation in regulation time plus two years for three-year qualifications and plus one year for professional four-year degrees) for all first-time entering students as 38 per cent for all three- and four-year degrees and 35 per cent for all three- and four-year qualifications. The 39 per cent completion rate arrived at in the present study is comparable with the CHE calculations, since it includes all qualifications, not only three- and four-year qualifications.

The CHE figure compares with a projected UK completion rate for the 2000/2001 cohort of 78 per cent (cited in CHE, 2009: 36) and of the 2007/2008 cohort – the completion rate for 2011 – of 72 per cent (OECD, 2013). In the American HE system, by contrast, 52 per cent of the 2000 cohort of students were reported to have completed a four-year qualification within a four-year period. A further 27 per cent persisted beyond the four years for up to a further four years from their original year of commencement (that is, they were enrolled for up to eight years in total), of whom 17 per cent eventually completed – rendering a completion rate of 69 per cent (Pfeffer & Goldrick-Rab, 2011). A later US study, of the 2004 entering cohort, found that 38.9 per cent of students at four-year institutions had completed a degree after four years, a further 17.5 per cent had completed after five years, and a further 4.8 per cent had completed after six years (DeAngelo, Franke, Hurtado, Pryor & Tran, 2011). A still more recent study (OECD, 2013) showed the US completion rate for 2011 (students who had entered in 2003/2004) to be 53 per cent.

In summary, while the data from the three countries are not perfectly comparable, by virtue of methodology and / or data period, the most recently available completion rates are 72 per cent for the UK, 53 cent for the US, and 39 per cent for South Africa.⁵

Second, data from the 2005 cohort of Grade 12 students in the present study revealed that while 102 students pursuing 63 different pathways “stopped out” of the HE system only to return in a subsequent year to continue with or complete their studies, a negligible percentage of these pathways (less than 1 per cent) issued in completion by 2010 – which leads us to conclude that HE completers for the most part study uninterruptedly. A similar trend is reported by Pfeffer & Goldrich-Rab (2011), who show that since the transition status in any year is likely to be the same as in the preceding year, US students who stop out are progressively less likely to complete. Nearly a third of US students reportedly stop out of HE (Berkner, 2002; Carroll, 1989; McCormick, 2003; Goldrick-Rab, 2006; Goldrich-Rab & Pfeffer, 2009) – though when, why, for how long they do so, and, crucially, whether they complete their study programmes obviously varies. Nor can we generalise from the findings of the present study to say that only 5 per cent of South African students stop out, since we do not know the final destinations of all students in the cohort: a number

⁵ The UK and US data come from the OECD’s *Education at a Glance*, where completion rates are defined as “the proportion of new entrants into a specified level of education who graduate with at least a first degree at this level” (OECD, 2013: 69) – hence the comparison with the CHE (2013) completion rate for three- and four-year degrees.

of students who appear to have dropped out may have returned to continue and / or complete their studies after 2010.

Our ignorance about the actual completion rate of a particular cohort of students is, obviously, a function of the number of years included in the five-year model. Since a number of students in the South African HE system delay entry into HE, it is theoretically possible that a ten-year model might provide a different completion profile from the five-year one devised in Chapter 6. Given the finding that students who enter HE immediately after school are more likely to complete than are students who delay entry to HE, however, it is unlikely that a ten-year profile would have rendered significantly different results overall. Indeed, 892 of the 1,910 students in the profile (47 per cent) entered HE in 2006 or 2007 *and did not complete a qualification*. The completion status of nearly half the cohort, then, is highly unlikely to change should the timeframe in the typology have been extended by five years.

The third conclusion is that SES is unquestionably a differentiating feature in student progression through HE, student retention within HE, and student completion of a HE programme. As we saw in Chapter 6, low-SES students are more likely than their high-SES counterparts to drop out of HE both after the first and after the second year of study and are less likely to complete a programme, whether they remain loyal to their programme of first enrolment or switch programmes in the course of their studies.

The South African experience in this regard is far closer to the US- and UK- than to the Australian experience. The US studies reviewed in Chapter 2 found large differences in university completion rates (as measured by completion of Bachelor's degrees) according to SES, whether at the aggregate level (Haveman & Smeeding, 2006) or whether completion rates were correlated with students' 8th grade Mathematics test scores (Fox, Connolly & Snyder, 2005) or with parental education and first-generation student status (Chingos & McPherson, 2011). Indeed, each gradation in SES (from low- to middle- to high-SES) was shown by Adelman (2006) to increase the probability of degree completion by about 6 per cent. Similarly, the UK literature reviewed in Chapter 2 showed that low-SES students were more likely to drop out of university, less likely to achieve a qualification, and less likely to achieve a first or upper-second class pass than were their high-SES counterparts (Crawford, 2014), even once student characteristics and prior achievement had been controlled for (Powdthavee & Vignoles (2008).

Why the Australian experience differs from that of the US and UK – HE having been reported in Australia to be a great leveller, students from different socio-economic backgrounds showing little differentiation in terms of retention and completion rates once access to HE has been achieved (QUT Vice-Chancellor, 2004; Marks, 2007: viii) – is a matter for speculation. It may well have to do, however, with Australia's use of a geographical index for SES classification rather than a calculation – as used in the present study, as indeed in American and British studies – based on parental / guardian occupation, income level, and educational attainment. The Australian index may therefore overestimate low-SES participation in Australian HE and correspondingly underestimate the rate of high-SES overrepresentation (Centre for the Study of Higher Education, 2008).

Retention and completion aside, SES is also a distinguishing feature, Chapter 6 has shown, in the timing of entry to and the nature of progression through HE. We saw from the Chapter 6 typology that high-SES students in South Africa are much less likely than their middle- and low-SES counterparts to delay entry into HE (four in five high-SES students proceeding directly to HE after school, only three in five low-SES students doing so). This finding bears out the US experience: in a 2007 study, 52 per cent of low-SES students enrolled in a HE institution within two years of leaving high school compared to 83 per cent of high-SES students (Rowan-Kenyon, 2007); and in 2009, 55 per cent of low-SES versus 84 per cent of high-SES school-leavers proceeded directly to HE (Aud, Hussar, Kena, Bianco, Frohlich, Kemp & Tahan, 2011). From a progression perspective, we saw from the Chapter 6 typology that students who complete their programmes of study almost without exception study continuously. This finding too is borne out in the literature, Adelman (2006) having found that being enrolled continuously increases the probability of students' earning a Bachelor's degree by 43 per cent. Indeed, the present study has shown that high-SES students pursuing the IUC pathway (entering HE in 2006 and proceeding uninterrupted through the system to completion) outnumbered low-SES students pursuing this pathway by 15 percentage points (43 per cent to 27 per cent).

On one reading of all these findings, including those from the present study, one might conclude that low- and high-SES students are polarized in their HE performance, high-SES students succeeding whilst their low-SES counterparts fail. But success and failure need to be evaluated not only against HE progression and its issuance in completion but in terms of prior academic performance at school – which the present study has not controlled for. It may be, for example, that high-SES students in the sample performed much better at school than did their low-SES counterparts; or, the corollary, that low-SES students performed, in relation to their academic achievement at school, much better in their progress through HE than their high-SES counterparts. Success and failure, therefore, are relative – and not only in terms of the direct comparison of low- and high-SES students in their progression into and through HE as considered in the present study.

On another reading of success, the fact that many low-SES students succeed *against the odds* should give us pause. The next section explores the possible meanings of such success.

EXERCISE OF CHOICE AND STUDENT BEHAVIOUR SELF-REGULATION AND -CORRECTION

The five-year pathway model and the typology derived from it in Chapter 6, while illustrating the broad trends in HE access, progression and programme completion, lose the aspect of programme preference and the pathway intricacies which this variable introduces: switching from a programme not chosen to one's chosen programme; switching from one's chosen programme to a programme not chosen; switching from a programme not chosen to another programme not chosen; and the effect of all these kinds of programme switching on programme completion. The typology proposed in Chapter 3 captured this element of programme choice. But to have included it in the Chapter 6 typology would have been to complicate that model, ultimately rendering it, through the addition of a further variable, unwieldy and therefore meaningless.

Nor is a typology of the kind deployed in Chapter 6 ideally suited to accounting for students' HE choices and programme preferences. For this, we need to consider the cases of individual students embarked upon their various journeys into, through and out of HE. The argument for an investigation into students' language made in Chapter 3 constitutes part of this consideration, enabling us, as I argued in that chapter, to go beyond the statistical profile of socio-economically differentiated student pathways to investigate the world-views of individual students. Equally, the language students use to justify their selection of a number on a five-point Likert-type scale in response to a question probing the extent to which they felt they had been able to exercise choice enables us to fly below the statistical radar to understand the actual motivations behind their quantitative responses. This quantitative-qualitative reflexivity reinforces the case for a mixed-method approach to the present study.

Accordingly, the discussion now turns to the analysis of students' ability to exercise choice, whether at the aspiration, preference, or enrolment stage.

The extent to which students feel they have been able to exercise choice in their lives is a good indicator both of their recognition that there are choices available to them and that their choices have implications for the trajectories along which they subsequently progress. Exercise of choice is fundamentally about the capacity for human agency, the four core properties of which, maintains Bandura (2006), are:

1. Intentionality: "People form intentions that include action plans and strategies for realizing them."
2. Forethought: "People set themselves goals and anticipate likely outcomes of prospective actions to guide and motivate their efforts."
3. Self-reactiveness: "Agency ... involves not only the deliberative ability to make choices and action plans, but also the ability to construct appropriate courses of action and to motivate and regulate their execution."
4. Self-reflectiveness: "Through functional self-awareness, [people] reflect on their personal efficacy, the soundness of their thoughts and actions, and the meaning of their pursuits, and they make corrective adjustments if necessary" (Bandura, 2006: 164, 165).

These four properties describe what is perhaps possible for well-adjusted adults in some ideal state, but hardly what is normative choice behaviour for students in transition from youth to adulthood. In terms of HE decision-making, while students certainly demonstrate intentionality in enrolling in HE institutions to study programmes chosen or otherwise and exercise some measure of forethought in approaching their studies, the capacity for self-reactiveness – particularly in terms of "construct[ing] appropriate courses of action" and "regulat[ing] their execution" – and especially for self-reflectiveness – particularly with regard to "mak[ing] corrective judgements if necessary" – is by no means well developed.

Nevertheless, behaviour self-regulation and -correction are evident to varying degrees in the behaviour of some of the students whose responses regarding the exercise of choice were examined in Chapter 6. In that chapter we saw a recognition on the part of some students that the hand dealt to them at birth was not necessarily to be their inexorable lot in life. The sense of realism identified in certain utterances in the exercise-of-choice analysis in Chapter 6 is a variation on this penchant for turning the negative into the positive.

While there was a correlation between the rating of exercise of choice on a five-point Likert-type scale and the ability to exercise choice, we saw that SES and extent of choice were only weakly correlated. Of the five student responses for which exercise of choice was rated 3, one student was a high-SES student and four were low-SES students; of the 16 student responses for which exercise of choice was rated 4 and where the SES of the student was known, one student was high-SES, one middle-SES and the remainder were low-SES students; and of the 13 student responses for which exercise of choice was rated 5 and where the SES of the student was known, four students were middle-SES and the remainder low-SES. SES is therefore not a distinguishing characteristic in a consideration of students' ability to exercise choice.

Nor was SES a key differentiating factor in the consideration of the choice behaviour of the ten students whose life stories were examined in Chapter 6. The case studies provide a rich tapestry, albeit only ten strands strong, of the selection challenges confronting students as they exercise HE programme choice at the preference and enrolment stages. We saw from Chapter 6 that only one of the ten students had a long-term goal in mind (teaching), the other nine working it out as they went along – acting on their second, third, or even fourth HE programme choices.

As case studies, these vignettes do not pretend to generalisable status. But it is useful to see them as instances of what Bassey (1999: 12) calls “fuzzy generalisation”. Bassey identifies three kinds of generalisation that can apply in social science research: scientific generalization (generalisation of the absolute kind); statistical generalisation; and fuzzy generalisation. Statistical generalisation is a quantitative measure. The data generated by the surveys underpinning this thesis that provide for the majority of the analysis in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, for example, are statistical in nature, even though we cannot claim – because of the increasing unrepresentativeness of the response profile for each successive survey – to full generalisability of the findings to the total population. Nevertheless, we can claim, with greater or lesser accuracy, that there is an *x per cent chance* that the findings pertaining to a sample of the population will pertain to the total population. A fuzzy generalisation, on the other hand, “makes no absolute claim to knowledge, but hedges its claim with uncertainties”, taking the form of the conversion of an empirical finding pertaining to one specific case to a “qualified general statement” that “In *some* cases it *may be* found that ...” (Bassey, 1999: 12; emphasis original).

The ten case study programme preference and enrolment vignettes discussed above may be generalised in this “fuzzy” way to suggest that a number of students in the full response profile whose programme enrolments did not accord with their initial preferences will have undertaken similar kinds of reality check in coming to terms with the gap between their aspirations and the non-realisation of those aspirations.

Besides the varying degrees of aspiration gap manifested in these vignettes, three other salient observations can be made from them. The first is that institutional access appears to trump programme access. So intent are students on accessing HE that getting into the institution appears to be more important, in all but two instances (Sarie and Ruth), than the programme one studies there. This attitude is understandable in a context in which educational and especially HE opportunities were largely denied to black students under the apartheid regime and would almost certainly have been denied to the majority of the parents of the students who participated in the case studies. It is

also understandable, relatedly, in a context in which, well into the democratic era, there are few opportunities, perceived and real, in South Africa for study beyond school except HE (see Cosser, 2011).

The second observation is that perseverance in the face of adversity is a hallmark of most of the students who participated in the case studies. While educational opportunity is handed to Ruth on a platter by virtue of the range of choices and career guidance options open to her, the remaining nine students all strive against various odds to turn threats into opportunities. Sarie succeeds in enrolling for study in the field of her choice despite a patriarchal Calvinist upbringing and family impecuniousness. The initial disappointment of not being able to enrol in the programme of one's choice (Marope, Matsephe, Amos, Tsephe, Lindiwe) is converted into enrolment in a second choice programme (Marope, Matsephe) or in a third- or fourth-choice programme (Amos, Tsephe, Lindiwe).

A key ingredient in this capacity for perseverance is personal efficacy, a characteristic of one of the four core properties of agency, self-reflectiveness (Bandura, 2006), alluded to above. Bandura argues that:

... efficacy beliefs determine how opportunities and impediments are viewed. People of low efficacy are easily convinced of the futility of effort in the face of difficulties. They quickly give up trying. Those of high efficacy view impediments as surmountable by improvement of self-regulatory skills and perseverant effort. They stay the course in the face of difficulties and remain resilient to adversity (Bandura, 2006: 171).

Whether or not the ten case study students “stay[ed] the course” to programme completion, they had all, by late 2008, demonstrated a capacity for standing up to, if not overcoming, adversity.

The third observation is that some students not only “sett[le] for less” (the title of the 2004 HSRC monograph by Cosser with Du Toit & Visser) in opting to enrol in a second-, third- or fourth-choice programme but learn to like it. Despite the odds stacked against her – having to repeat part of Grade 12 to improve her chances of accessing HE and still not being able to access the programme she wanted to study in the institution in which she wanted to study – Matsephe's reaction to her parents having given her freedom of choice was immense gratitude. Likewise, Sipiwe was prepared to settle for less to begin with – having to enrol in a Foundation Programme and not in the first year of degree study – because he saw such enrolment as a stepping-stone to escaping the socio-economic situation into which he was born.

APPROPRIATION OF THE INTERNAL GOODS OF A PRACTICE AND ACQUISITION OF EPISTEMOLOGICAL ACCESS TO A PROGRAMME OF STUDY

The three observations made in relation to the case studies discussed above lead inevitably to an examination of the extent to which, and the ways in which, MacIntyre's (1981) notion of appropriating the internal goods of a practice and Morrow's (1993) notion of acquiring

epistemological access to a programme of study are manifested in the pathways of students into and through HE.

MacIntyre's (1981) chess example is instructive in the case of some of the students whose pathways were examined in Chapter 6. The student response "becoming a nurse wasn't exactly my dream *but I'll make it work*" (#4)⁶ epitomizes the premise in MacIntyre's example, that incentivisation is offered *precisely because the child does not want to learn to play chess*. The trainee nurse's assertion that she will embrace her nursing training even though nursing was not her first choice gestures towards MacIntyre's notion of appropriating the internal goods of a practice. But the student response "*but I've accepted [having to study part-time and work simultaneously] because it teaches me responsibility, discipline and hardworking*" (#9) comes closer to such appropriation, the student recognising what it will take to succeed in his programme of study and identifying the internal rewards – responsibility, discipline, and a work ethic – which practice in the "discipline" in question will confer. These are not exactly the internal rewards – "analytical skill, strategic imagination and competitive intensity" – MacIntyre (1981: 175-176) has in mind; but they hold out the possibility of engendering these skills.

It is not only from the qualitative data that we can glean certain clues about the appropriation of the internal rewards of the practice, however. From the analysis of the factors influencing students' enrolment in their HE study programmes in 2008 which was undertaken in the first part of Chapter 6 we saw that "Interest in this field of study" was paramount for students at the aggregate level (the mean score was 4.4 on the five-point Likert-type scale). Interest in a programme is the first step towards appropriating for oneself the internal rewards which practice in acquiring knowledge and the skills sets needed to master a field of endeavour confers. In this sense the primacy of interest in the programme as a reason for entering it is an encouraging sign. But interestingly this is true only of middle- and high-SES students (the mean scores for whom were 4.4 and 4.6 respectively); for low-SES students the primary variable influencing enrolment in a study programme was "Opportunities of finding a job in South Africa after qualifying in this field" – for which the mean score was 4.3, compared to the score of 4.1 accorded to the variable "Interest in this field of study". An external, instrumental variable therefore proves more influential a motivator for low-SES students' enrolling in a field of study than does intrinsic interest in that field. This finding is not surprising in a context of a total unemployment rate of 23.2 per cent and an unemployment rate amongst 15 to 24-year-olds of 44.5 per cent in the third quarter of 2008,⁷ when students participated in the 2nd tracer survey.

The primacy of external over internal reward in the motivations of low-SES students resonates strongly with the earlier assertion, in the context of the discussion about the case study students' determination to access HE, about the primacy of access to HE over access to a programme of study. This brings us to Morrow's (1993) distinction between formal and epistemological access. Formal access, to summarise, denotes access to an institution; epistemological access entails engaging with the concepts, debates and methods of the field of study, "learning how to become a participant in an academic *practice*" (Morrow, 1994: 40; emphasis added) – *practice* being the operative word linking the MacIntyre and Morrow conceptions.

⁶ Original orthography is retained here and in subsequent quotations.

⁷ Author's calculations, from Stats SA (2008).

The five-year pathway model developed in Chapter 6 demonstrates the interplay between formal and epistemological access. Students who follow a linear, continuous-study pathway to programme completion or complete a programme to which they have switched after initially enrolling in another field of study can be said to have achieved full formal and epistemological access. At the other extreme are students who fail even to obtain formal access – that is, students pursuing Pathway 1 in the ten-pathway typology in Chapter 3.

Between these extremes are two main formal-epistemological access acquisition types:

- Students who attain formal access but, by virtue of dropping out of university after one year (or less), fail altogether to achieve epistemological access.
- Students who attain formal access and partial epistemological access – successfully completing two or more years of HE (that is, being retained in the system) but failing to achieve a qualification.

The latter category – formal access and partial epistemological access – has two years of formal access as an arbitrary retention period; but of course the extent of epistemological access will notionally depend on how many years a student is retained in the system. Populating these four positions with data from the five-year pathway model in Chapter 6 reveals that:

1. All students achieved at least formal if not epistemological access⁸
2. Twelve per cent of students achieved formal but no epistemological access (14 per cent low-SES and 8 per cent high-SES students)
3. Forty-seven per cent of students achieved formal access and partial epistemological access (48 per cent low- and 45 per cent high-SES students); and
4. Forty-one per cent of students achieved formal access and full epistemological access (38 per cent of low- and 48 per cent of high-SES students).

According to this conceptualisation, only a very small percentage of students (12.4 per cent overall) did not gain any epistemological access – which for some researchers (for example, Baum & Ma, 2007; Marks, 2007) is unproblematic, since any number of years of exposure to HE is deemed to be beneficial for a student, for the economy, and for society in general. For example, Baum & Ma (2007: 2) contend that “Any college experience produces a measurable return when compared with none, but the benefits of completing a bachelor’s degree or higher are particularly large.”⁹ Unsurprisingly, given the higher dropout rate among low-SES students, the percentage of low-SES students in the “Formal access and partial epistemological access” category is larger than that of high-SES students (14 per cent versus 8 per cent).

⁸ By definition, since only students who enrolled in HE formed the subject of analysis.

⁹ The returns for those who acquire some HE are shown to be higher than those for high school graduates but lower than those for persons with associate degrees in the US college system on the following indicators: earnings and tax payments; lifetime earnings; earnings by education level, race / ethnicity, and gender; earnings by education level and gender; earnings over time by education level and gender; subscription to pension plans; economic benefits to others; lower unemployment; lower poverty; greater involvement in public assistance programs; better health; taking more exercise; higher cognitive skills of preschool children; volunteerism; blood donation; higher voting turnout; and trying to understand opinions of others.

The largest percentage of students – nearly half of the sample (48 per cent) – gained formal access and only partial epistemological access. This again is in line with the completion rate of students observed in Chapter 6, three out of five students failing to complete a programme within the five-year period. Again, a slightly higher percentage of low- than of high-SES students (48 per cent versus 45 per cent) was in this category.

Two out of five students (41 per cent) gained full formal and epistemological access. It is here where we see the largest difference between low- and high-SES students: 38 per cent of low-SES students versus 48 per cent of high-SES students achieved full formal and epistemological access to HE. Of those who gained full access, however, nearly a quarter of students (23 per cent) at the aggregate level switched programmes in the course of their studies, 22 per cent of low-SES students versus 29 per cent of high-SES students. This distinction confirms the earlier finding about the greater propensity of high- than of low-SES students who switch programmes in the course of their studies to actually complete the programme to which they had switched.

FUTURE PROFESSION, WORK, AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Chapter 7 explored students' imagined journeys beyond HE as they contemplated what professions they would enter, what working conditions would be like in their future jobs, and what social conditions would prevail ten years after their participation in the baseline survey of 2005. As we saw, there were some distinguishing features in the articulated aspirations of students from low- and from high socio-economic backgrounds.

The overarching distinguishing feature separating low- from high-SES students appears to be level of awareness. We observed above that the propensity of low-SES students to have enrolled in a programme area not of their original (2005) choice suggested a lack of realism in their programme-related aspirations (that is, in their programme preferences). That same lack of realism is evident in the apparent disconnect between the professions many low-SES students want to enter and the programmes and institutions in which they enrol.

Students' motives for enrolling for a qualification and in a programme which will not necessarily equip them for entry into their chosen profession are difficult to fathom. By way of arbitrary example, are low-SES students who want to become accountants and who enrol for a National Higher Certificate (NHC): Accountancy at the Tshwane University of Technology:

- In psychological denial about the gap between their professional aspiration and the means to achieve that aspiration?
- Ignorant of the professional requirements for becoming an accountant – which include enrolling for a Bachelor of Accounting Science degree or a Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting degree or an equivalent CA (SA) undergraduate qualification at a South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA)-accredited university (see SAICA, 2015); or
- Deliberately using the NHC as a stepping-stone to the requisite degree at a SAICA-accredited institution, not having had the grades and / or the finances to take the linear route in pursuit of becoming a Chartered Accountant (CA)?

The pathway to becoming a CA is no doubt bewildering to first-time-entering students whose

admission to a university of any kind is tenuous.¹⁰ There are no universities of technology or comprehensive universities in the list of SAICA-accredited institutions, and only three of the SAICA-accredited universities (Limpopo, Fort Hare, and the Western Cape) are institutions formerly earmarked for previously disadvantaged students and notionally remain the HE destinations of many low-SES students, especially those resident in Limpopo, the Eastern Cape or the Western Cape. Without the appropriate academic requirements imposed by individual institutions over and above a university entrance pass at Grade 12 level, students would be hard-pressed to gain access to the appropriate degree programme.

A similar lack of awareness is evident in the choice behaviour of low-SES students wanting to enter particular professions for specified reasons. We saw in Chapter 7 a strong association between low-SES student desire to enter the academy and remuneration prospects on the one hand and the desire to be one's own boss and be entrepreneurial on the other – findings that run counter to what would notionally be general knowledge to students from privileged backgrounds about the salaries of and entrepreneurial opportunities for academics. Are such counter-intuitive findings a function of student ignorance, lack of access to accurate information, self-delusion, or some other factor? The answer – as is the answer to the question about what motivates a student wanting to become a CA to enrol for a NHC: Accountancy at the Tshwane University of Technology – is beyond the scope of this thesis; but the question would frame a useful follow-up case study of the pathway from HE aspiration and programme preference to institutional choice, programme enrolment, professional aspiration, and labour market destination.

As the pathway to becoming a CA demonstrates, the choices which students wanting to pursue such a career need to make are not successive but simultaneous: the route to becoming a CA involves enrolling for the appropriate degree *in a SAICA-accredited university*. Because the *practice*, in the MacIntyre (1981) sense, of accounting begins with entry into a degree programme leading to SAICA accreditation, one can speak of epistemological access not merely to a programme but to the profession itself. Practice in the degree programme is an integral part of practice in the profession – but only if there is consonance between the programme enrolled in and the profession aspired to. For low-SES students, as we saw in Chapter 7, this consonance was only 48 per cent, while for high-SES students it was 73 per cent. The extent of epistemological access to the profession is constrained, therefore, by the extent to which practice in the programme forms part of practice in and for the profession. The difference is between alignment of aspirations, programme choice and institutional enrolment that issues, on the one hand, in a logical, if not linear, pathway into the profession and, on the other, alternative pathways into the profession that involve switching programme and institution and, inevitably, the pursuit of an extended trajectory.

The operative word here is “extended”. It is unsurprising, given the complexity of the CA pathway – and indeed of pathways for entry into other professions where professional certification is required for practice at the highest level – and the manifest difficulty for the majority of students of achieving the epistemological access needed to successfully complete a degree programme in the regulated time that the CHE (2013) has made the case for an extended curriculum as a means to

¹⁰ Beyond undergraduate degree study, becoming a CA involves completing a Certificate in the Theory of Accounting or a Higher Diploma in Accountancy, entering into a three-year Learnership with a Registered Training Office, and

increase the South African HE graduation rate. The summary motivation of the team tasked with considering how best to increase student graduation reads as follows:

- Only about one in four students in contact institutions (that is, excluding UNISA) graduate in regulation time (for example, three years for a three-year degree).
- Only 35% of the total intake, and 48% of contact students, graduate within five years.
- When allowance is made for students taking longer than five years to graduate or returning to the system after dropping out, it is estimated that some 55% of the intake will never graduate.
- Access, success and completion rates continue to be racially skewed, with white completion rates being on average 50% higher than African rates.
- The net result of the disparities in access and success is that under 5% of African and coloured youth are succeeding in any form of higher education (CHE, 2013: 15).

This motivation resonates strongly with the findings of the current study, which has shown that only 40 per cent students completed over a five-year period (when 92 per cent of students could have done so), that increasing the time-frame from five to ten years (as per the third bullet point above) would make no appreciative difference to the completion rate, and that the success rates of low-SES students are notably poorer than those of high-SES students.

Students' stated motivations for entering specified professions

The discussion above has led, not unfruitfully, to a questioning of students' motives for entering a particular profession. We have focused on the Accounting profession because of its evident popularity amongst a large number of students in the sample. The discussion has been speculative, however, probing the reasons for the apparent disconnect between students' choice of a particular profession and their enrolment decisions in relation to that choice – a discussion which issued in a proposal for further, qualitative, research on the linkages amongst the various stages in the student choice behaviour process. But in Chapter 7 we also saw more concrete evidence of students' motivations to choose to enter specified professions, motivations that revealed clear distinctions between low- and high-SES students.

Analysis in Chapter 7 revealed that while a passion for the profession and the certainty of finding a job in that profession were equally important for low-SES students (the mean score for both was 4.2 on the five-point Likert-type scale), for high-SES students there was a significant difference between the two. For high-SES students, a passion for the profession was much more important than finding a job in that profession (4.4 versus 4.1). On the other hand, the money and status afforded by a chosen profession proved to be important motivators for high-SES students (the scores for both were 3.9), but were not at all significant for low-SES students (the scores were 3.4 and 3.3 respectively).

At the same time, we saw earlier that while interest in one's chosen study programme was paramount for high-SES students (the mean score was 4.4), job opportunities in South Africa were

completing the Qualifying Examination and, for those wanting to follow the auditing route, the Professional Practice Examination.

paramount for low-SES students (4.3). Interest in the field of study scored only 4.1 for low-SES students. Similarly, passion for the profession proved to be more important for high-SES than for low-SES students (the scores were 4.4 versus 4.2).

Two conclusions can be drawn from these findings. First, high-SES students are more motivated than are their low-SES counterparts by the possibility of intrinsic reward held out by a programme of study or the profession for which that programme is a prerequisite. In other words, there is for high-SES students a greater consonance between the programme and the profession – confirming the point made above in the discussion about the pathway to becoming a CA.

The second conclusion follows from this. It is that while low-SES motivation, whether for choosing a programme of study or deciding on a profession, is geared towards finding a job, high-SES student motivation is geared towards the money and status, not the job itself, which the profession will confer – as though finding a job were axiomatic. This is a key distinction, since it indicates a core difference in the mind-sets of students from high and low socio-economic backgrounds. The importance attached by low-SES students to finding employment outweighs any other consideration, suggesting in the final analysis that HE is, somewhat instrumentally, a means to finding a job.

These two conclusions reinforce the earlier conclusion about the relationship between the factors influencing choice of study programme and appropriation of the internal goods of the practice.

Students' attitudes towards life and work beyond higher education

The penultimate section of this chapter explores the implications of students' perceptions of what their future work spaces and the social conditions in which they will live and work will be like.

The analysis, in Chapter 7, of students' anticipated future working conditions confirms the point made above about the absolute importance, for low-SES students, of finding a job. The fact that low-SES students are more influenced than are their high-SES counterparts by the prospects of job satisfaction and job security reinforces the primacy of employment. It is not that these aspects are not important for high-SES students; it is their relatively greater importance for low-SES students. For high-SES students, on the other hand, self-employment and entrepreneurship are relatively more important, both than job security and satisfaction and more important than for low-SES students.

The polarization of low- and high-SES students in their views on public education and healthcare observed in Chapter 7 mirrors what appears to be a growing rift between the advocates of private and public schooling and of private and public healthcare in South Africa as the country enters its third decade of democracy. But in the realm of education, "private good, public bad", as Gravett & Godsell pointed out as far back as 2011, is a simplistic tag trotted out in ignorance of the facts that:

- Learners in the majority of private schools write the state examination
- Two-fifths of learners in former "Model C" schools [the proportion will be even higher in 2015] – where success rates are far higher than in public schools as a whole and are in many

instances comparable to or better than results in elite private schools – are black African; and that

- The private schooling sector includes a range of differential income school types, from elite to poor schools (Gravett & Godsell, 2011: n.p.).

The sheer diversity of the schooling system which this analysis suggests points up the misguidedness of facile distinctions between public and private education.¹¹

HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS, REDRESS, AND SUCCESS

The South African HE system is characterised by a triadic relationship between access, redress, and success. With formal access largely having been achieved as measured by access of formerly disadvantaged students to HE – the CHE (2013: 39) claiming that 79 per cent of enrolments by 2010 were black African – the focus has shifted to success; hence the current national preoccupation not only with increasing graduation rates but with increasing the number of students graduating from the HE system (CHE, 2013).

The achievement of formal access should not, however, lull one into a sense that the proverbial playing field is now level. Redress in the NQF sense, as conceptualised in the fourth objective of the NQF (“Accelerate the redress of past unfair discrimination in education, training and employment opportunities” – SAQA, 2005: Clause 2), may have been achieved if *redress* is synonymous purely with opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups to access HE. But in a post-formal-access context, redress is very much bound up with the achievement of epistemological access and therefore with opportunities for programme completion, or with what SAQA calls, somewhat euphemistically, “learner achievement”¹² – notwithstanding the facts that:

- The term *redress* is not included in the *NQF – Standard Glossary of Terms* (SAQA, 2014) – ironically, since formal access, as the present study has shown, does not in itself connote the attainment of redress; and that
- The CHE itself does not use the term in any sense other than the Education White Paper 3 sense (DoE: 1997: 1.14).

From a pathway perspective, there are gradations of success. One road – ironically and increasingly the road less travelled – involves students entering the HE institution of their choice, enrolling in the programme area of their choice and pursuing that programme to completion within regulation time without switching or stopping out of the programme. Other roads to success involve combinations, either including or not including some of those aspects characterising the road less travelled, of: false starts; entering a HE institution not of one’s choice; enrolling in a programme

¹¹ By the same token, the polarisation of the public and private healthcare systems may conjure up the “private good, public bad” mantra. But as Francis (2013) has shown – and here there is a glaring difference between healthcare and education from a public versus private sector perspective – private health care, while it may be ubiquitously superior to public healthcare, is rendered increasingly unaffordable to the majority of the population by a toxic combination of market failure, hospital group monopoly, and over-servicing (Francis, 2013: 47-49). Such information casts further doubt on the validity of the “private good, public bad” claim.

¹² SAQA defines “learner achievement” as “The successful completion of a qualification or part qualification that is captured on the [National Learners’ Records Database]”, glossed in the HE context as “graduate” (SAQA, 2014: 38).

area not of one's choice; stopping out; switching programme (either to the programme of one's choice or to another programme); and eventually graduating, often not within regulation time. And since success is not necessarily an event (graduation) but a process, often involving years of perseverance against the odds, its fruits may not be evident within a particular temporal unit of analysis (such as the five-year period under investigation in this study) but may manifest themselves only much later, and not necessarily in the form looked for. If any number of years of HE is indeed better than none (Baum & Ma, 2007; Marks, 2007) and if success is measured in broader, societal terms, many students in the sample examined in this study may be deemed to have been successful. This is a strong argument for life history research that considers *success* within the longest possible vista and the largest possible context.

NQF FACILITATION OF STUDENT ACCESS, MOBILITY, AND PROGRESSION

A consideration of whether the pathways of students from low, middle and high socio-economic backgrounds presented and discussed in this study provide evidence of NQF facilitation of access to, and mobility and progression within, education, training and career paths is a moot point.

On the one hand, institutional access has certainly been achieved if we apply the simplistic SAQA definition of *access* in a HE context – as outlined in Chapter 1 – as “entry to higher education” (SAQA 2014: 10). Since all the students included in the Chapter 6 typology had by definition entered HE in 2006, formal (institutional) access is, for the purposes of this study, axiomatic. Whether students enjoyed epistemological access is rather harder to ascertain. Using the arbitrary measure of synonymy between programme completion and full epistemological access, just under half of the high-SES students but fewer than two-fifths of the low-SES students achieved epistemological access; and using the even more arbitrary measure of synonymy between two or more years of HE without programme completion and *partial* epistemological access, just under half of the low-SES students versus 45 per cent of the high-SES students achieved partial epistemological access. On these arbitrary measures, some epistemological access has been achieved by low-SES students.

The facilitation of student mobility and progression, similarly, has been achieved only partially. Applying the SAQA definitions of these terms, *progression* – as discussed in Chapter 1 – is “The means by which individuals are permitted to move through NQF levels by accumulating appropriate combinations of credits” (SAQA, 2014: 53). *Mobility*, however, is, unaccountably, defined neither in the document *NQF – Standard Glossary of Terms* (SAQA, 2014) nor in the document *Policy and Criteria for the Registration of Qualifications and Part Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework* (SAQA, 2013). To be “mobile” is to have the capacity “to move or be moved readily from place to place” – in a social context, “moving relatively easily from one social class or level to the next” (www.thefreedictionary.com) – which would suggest that its only purpose in the second objective of the NQF is to qualify *progression* as being *free* or *ready*.

From an NQF perspective, student progression – as measured by credit accumulation, in this instance qualification attainment – has been achieved to some extent by high-SES students (fewer

than half of high-SES students achieved a qualification) and to an even lower extent by low-SES students (only just over a third achieved a qualification). Nevertheless, the data show that one in three students from a low socio-economic background did indeed progress successfully from one NQF level (level 4) to a higher NQF level (5 or 6 – since qualifications could have been achieved at either of these levels on the NQF).

All of this begs the question, however, as to whether such progression is attributable to the NQF or whether it might have occurred had the NQF not been in place. HE in South Africa did not, from the first, subscribe to the NQF as the NQF architects had intended. From its earliest days in 1998 (the SAQA office began its work in February of that year), SAQA was at pains to promote the NQF within the HE sector, but found that its (SAQA's) preponderant focus on qualification generation in a context in which universities and technikons were loath, for competitive reasons, to sacrifice their own carefully crafted qualifications on the altar of a national qualifications framework was rebuffed. Since the HE sector was never under the spell of the NQF, then, it could be argued that there has been no special NQF magic in the progression of students through the HE system.

While it may be argued that the introduction of the NQF in 1998 (three years after the promulgation of the SAQA Act) as part of the political project of transforming the South African education system (Allais, 2003) begun in 1992 with the publication of the NEPI report (NEPI, 1992) had an indirect, generally beneficial impact on student access to and progression through HE, evidence for such an argument would be difficult to find. There are no pre- and post- studies comparing the impact of the apartheid and post-apartheid education dispensations on student progression – notwithstanding the studies on student success conducted by Bunting (2004) and Bunting, Sheppard, Cloete & Belding (2010).

In the final analysis, then, we must conclude from the evidence and argument presented that the NQF objectives of access, mobility and progression on the one hand and of redress on the other have been only partially realised – and not necessarily because of the NQF itself – in the pathways of low-SES students from school in 2005 into and through HE between 2006 and 2010.

CHAPTER 9 – CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins by outlining the main conclusions arising from the study in relation to the research questions articulated in Chapter 1. It then considers some implications of the findings in relation to gaps in the literature and to conceptual gaps in our understanding of student pathways articulated in the first three chapters. This is followed by a reflection on the limitations of the study. The chapter concludes with a presentation of some of the recommendations arising from the findings.

CONCLUSIONS ARISING FROM THE STUDY

The primary research question and concomitant secondary questions to which the study has addressed itself are:

To what extent have students from low socio-economic backgrounds been able to progress into and through HE in comparison with students from high socio-economic backgrounds?

- To what extent have low-SES students been able to achieve success in their chosen studies – that is, complete the qualification programmes in which they have enrolled – in comparison with their high-SES counterparts?
- What are the factors that have shaped the trajectories of low- versus high-SES students in their passage into and through HE?

The study has shown empirically and unequivocally that SES is a differentiating feature in the transition to HE, in programme enrolment in HE, in progression through HE, and in student completion of a HE programme. The conclusions outlined below amplify this statement.

As we saw in Chapter 6, low- and middle-SES students are much more likely than high-SES students to have delayed entry into HE. While 78 per cent of high-SES students proceeded directly to HE after school, 69 per cent of middle-SES students and only 60 per cent of low-SES students did so. Delayed entry is associated with lower success: while only 7 per cent of students who delayed entry into HE completed a qualification – notwithstanding the fact that, as shown in Chapter 6, the overwhelming majority (92 per cent) of students in the sample could have completed regardless of how long their study programme or when they entered – 32 per cent of students who entered HE straight after school and studied uninterruptedly (students following the IUC pathway) achieved a qualification. But the success rates of low- versus high-SES students differed substantially: while 43 per cent of high-SES students followed this pathway, only 27 per cent of low-SES students did so. Students who enter HE immediately after school and proceed uninterruptedly through the system, achieving a qualification in the process, are more likely, therefore, to come from high-SES than from middle- and low-SES backgrounds.

At the same time, broken (B) pathways are associated with lower success rates. While 5 per cent of high-SES students delayed entry into HE, had their studies interrupted (B), and failed to achieve a qualification (the DBN pathway in the typology), 13% of low-SES students were in this category.

Low-SES students are also more likely than their high-SES counterparts to have dropped out of HE both after the first and after the second year of study – confirming findings from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. But because the phenomenon of dropout clearly impacts on the completion rate, we have seen also that low-SES students are less likely to have pursued a pathway issuing in completion and less likely to have completed a qualification after programme switching.

From a programme enrolment perspective, low-SES students were shown to be far less likely than their high-SES counterparts to have enrolled in the programme area in which they had initially expressed an interest in 2005 – especially those who enrolled in Business / commerce or in the Natural & mathematical sciences. This suggests a lack of realism in the aspirations of low-SES students that bears out Ray's (2006) notion of the aspirations gap (the distance between aspirations and their realisation), confirming similar findings in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. The gap appears to be much larger for low-SES than for high-SES students, suggesting that the former are more out of touch with the reality that their aspirations may not be achievable.

As this account reveals, separating out the supposedly discrete elements of the pathway process – entry, enrolment, progression, success – and reporting on them accordingly is not practicable. What we can say, from the above summary, is that:

- With regard to the primary research question, the progression of students from low socio-economic backgrounds into HE is more impeded, by virtue of timing of entry into HE and choice of programme for enrolment, than that of students from high socio-economic backgrounds.

In relation to the first of the secondary research questions:

- The fact that low-SES is more strongly associated with delayed entry into, broken progression through, and lower success in, HE, high-SES with immediate entry into, uninterrupted progression through, and greater success in, HE suggests that, on the measure of success as programme completion, low-SES students are less successful than their high-SES counterparts.

This latter finding again bears out what we saw from the literature in Chapter 2.

It is clear from the evidence presented in this study, then, that SES remains a strong determinant of academic success; and so while the HE sector and NQF might aspire to reduce inequalities in access, mobility and throughput, indications are that these inequalities are still being reproduced.

This said, the differential behaviour of low- and high-SES students has been shown to be not so much a matter of polarisation as of degree. On no dimensions are the differences so stark as to suggest diametrically opposed opposites. This phenomenon of a continuum of progression and performance is epitomised, in the study, by the outcome of the analyses of the factors shaping

student trajectories. The following explanation addresses the second of the secondary research questions.

Low- and high-SES students have been shown to be differentiated by their HE choices, low-SES students having been influenced predominantly by the enhanced employability supposedly conferred by the achievement of a qualification in the field in question, high-SES students predominantly by interest in their chosen field of study. This finding confirms what we saw from the literature in Chapter 2. But the nature of this differentiation is nuanced. In line with the employability-interest distinction, the differential orientations of low- and high-SES students appear to be towards instrumentalism versus intrinsic interest. Appropriating for oneself the internal goods of a practice (MacIntyre, 1981) – the theoretical premise of the study outlined in Chapter 3 with which the achievement of epistemological access (Morrow, 1993) is closely allied – has been shown to be a key ingredient in HE success, the first step towards which is interest in and passion for a study programme. Interest and passion are equally important in choosing a profession; and as the study has shown, high-SES students are more motivated than low-SES students by the possibility of intrinsic reward held out by the profession they want to enter.

But high-SES students, while less motivated than low-SES students in choosing a programme of study by the prospect of finding a job, are more motivated, in choosing a profession, than are low-SES students by money and status – the job accoutrements without which the very instrumentalism of getting the job would not exist. This paradox suggests that the instrumentalism displayed by high-SES students is merely a little more sophisticated than that of their low-SES counterparts – which serves to narrow the aspirations gap between them.

The progression-performance continuum, the study has demonstrated, manifests itself as follows. While high-SES students show a greater proclivity for enrolling in the programme of their initial choice and of progressing through that programme without interruption towards completion, low-SES students are more prone to enrolling in a programme of their second, third or even fourth choice and to progressing through that programme, either stopping out (often for financial and / or academic performance reasons) or switching programmes, and to completing a programme beyond regulation time. There is consequently a delay in their achievement of the epistemological access which their high-SES counterparts are wont to attain with greater facility.

But the operative phrase in the penultimate sentence is “completing *a* programme” (emphasis added). As the case studies of ten students have highlighted, the programme low-SES students complete is often not the programme in which they originally enrolled; but it is a programme they have learned to like. Crucially, they have learned to like the programme not in a resigned sense, but precisely through gaining epistemological access to its inner workings, by appropriating for themselves the internal goods of the practice which provide the sense of self-fulfilment envisaged by MacIntyre’s imaginary chess-playing child, who comes to enjoy the game because s/he appreciates it for what it is and not for what participation in it throws up by way of external reward (the candy initially on offer).

In response to the second of the secondary research questions, then:

- High-SES students are more influenced than are their low-SES counterparts by intrinsic interest in their chosen programme, low-SES students by the prospect of finding employment with a qualification in their chosen programme area; but as in the case of the SES distinctions observed above in relation to entry, progression and performance, the differences are a matter of degree rather than dichotomy.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

The findings and conclusions discussed above both confirm and extend our knowledge of student pathways through the HE system. They do so through tracking a student cohort not just into *but through* HE, considering the factors influencing student choices at every stage of the process: HE aspiration; programme preference; programme enrolment at two points two years apart; future profession; and work and life aspiration.

Various implications arise from these findings and conclusions. These can be categorised as:

- Implications of the use of the SES variable
- Theoretical implications
- Implications for SAQA and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
- Methodological implications.

Each of these categories is discussed below in relation to gaps in the literature and to conceptual gaps in our understanding of student pathways.

Implications of the use of the SES variable

This study is the first national, large-scale study in South Africa to use an income-based variable (SES) instead of race to distinguish the pathways of students from schools into and through public HE institutions. The Council on Higher Education provides data on “graduation in regulation time” and on “first-year attrition” rates disaggregated by race (CHE, 2013: 43-44); but it does not distinguish student performance on the basis of SES. The apparent ambivalence of the state in reporting race-based data¹³ both fuels the current (2015) national preoccupation with race and contributes to the sense of uncertainty about the validity of reporting on it.

The progression-performance continuum discussed in the foregoing section is in fact in part a function of the differentiation of panel study data by SES. Racial categorisation into four “population groups” – the term still in use in certain education publications (see, for example, DHET, 2014) – compels hard distinctions based on skin colour that are morally untenable and scientifically unsupportable.¹⁴ SES is not only uncontroversial but, eleven years into democracy (at

¹³ Even within the same domain – education – the Department of Basic Education disaggregates data by gender but not by race – see, for example, DBE (2014) – while the DHET disaggregates data by both gender and race – see, for example, DHET (2014).

¹⁴ Skin colour is hardly monochromatic. As Relethford (2000) has shown, natural human skin colour diversity within populations is highest in Sub-Saharan African populations, with skin reflectance values ranging from 19 to 46 (median = 31) compared with European and East Asian populations, which have skin reflectance values of 62 to 69 and 50 to 59 respectively (Jablonski & Chaplin, 2000).

the time of the baseline survey, in 2005), a more egalitarian indicator of difference *based on gradations along a continuum* from low to middle to high SES.¹⁵ In combination with panel data, it allows us not only to measure SES at a particular point, moreover, but to assess how SES changes with education attainment. The deployment of an index of income differentiation is therefore a powerful tool for monitoring changes in socio-economic stratification over time.

Theoretical implications of the study

The development, in Chapter 3, of a theoretical framework for facilitating our understanding of students' learning as they progress through HE was set against a credit accumulation model that saw learning as the totalling of credits based on a temporal conception – one credit representing ten notional hours of learning. The conceptual poverty of the credit accumulation model necessitated a new conception of pathway progression that could account for student transition from academic illiteracy to familiarity with the inner workings of the discipline. And while pathway typologies have hitherto assumed homogeneity with respect to motivation (as in the Cross et al., 2010, conception) and even SES, viewing throughput through a systemic, undifferentiated lens, the framework developed in Chapter 3 and modified in Chapter 6 brings these factors into relation with one another, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics of student progression. The theoretical model developed in Chapter 3 makes a targeted contribution to our understanding of student acquisition of academic literacy – seeing this as a process of appropriating for oneself the internal goods of the academic practice. Such a process differs, as the data have demonstrated, for students from low and from high socio-economic backgrounds, both in time and in facility. Bourdieu's notions of cultural capital and *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977) and Goldthorpe's theories on social class (for example, Goldthorpe, 1987) account, in different ways, for social and economic stratification. But these theories do not have the explanatory power to account for the ways in which students of whatever socio-economic background achieve epistemological access – the specific interest of the present study.

The appropriation of the internal goods of a practice (MacIntyre, 1981) and its correlate, the achievement of epistemological access (Morrow, 1993; 1994), provide a conceptual framework within which the shift from being an outsider to being an insider within an academic discipline or professional practice can be understood. From a socio-economic perspective, the achievement of epistemological access may come sooner to those who know from the start what they want to study and have the means (including the financial resources) to do so. To others it may come more slowly. But this does not mean that success is necessarily achieved only at the first, or without surmounting any, hurdle: perseverance has been shown in this study to be a major aspect of success, especially for individuals who, by dint of the circumstances into which they were born, are not able to “fulfil their potential” (NPC, 2012: 38) straight away. This National Development Plan (NDP) emphasis on the individual is important in a policy environment that favours the achievement of national, largely economic, objectives¹⁶ over individual aspirations.

¹⁵ Middle-SES findings are not analysed in this study, since the focus has been on low-high differentiation – which renders the relatively small differences between low- and high-SES students observed in this study all the more remarkable.

¹⁶ See, for example, DoE (2001); Cloete, Maassen, Fehnel, Moja, Perold & Gibbon (2004); CHE (2013).

The alternative to the internal goods-epistemological access model proposed here is that students are driven by external reward – which in the context of HE means satisfaction with accumulating credits and “getting” the qualification – and view formal access to the institution as being synonymous with achieving that end. There are resonances here with the market-based approach to HE, in which students are consumers who “can simply buy an education. If things go wrong or the student ends up lacking the promised knowledge and skills, it is the seller’s fault in that the product is deficient” (Kotzmann, 2014: n.p.). Learning, as conceptualised by MacIntyre (1981) and Morrow (1993; 1994), involves engagement – the very antithesis of student consumerism, which rather than encouraging students to “disengage from the learning process” (Kotzmann, 2014: n.p.), precludes them from engaging at all.

Even engagement is a differentiated phenomenon, however. For some students, engagement is an uncomplicated, seamless process that may have begun in high school and is perpetuated and merely intensified in the university. But for others – for those who have learned to like a learning programme either not of their initial choosing or one that is their default choice – engagement means changing programmes *for external reasons* but learning to like that new programme through accessing, by participation in it, the *internal* goods which sustained practice in it has to offer.

Implications for SAQA and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

From the review of NQF-related literature in Chapter 2 we saw that the South African government was itself reassessing the overarching role of the NQF in the transformation of the education and training systems just five years after the operationalization of the NQF – claiming that such goals as access, mobility, progression, quality, redress and development were “wider and deeper than the NQF” (DoE & DoL, 2002: 65). Quite apart from SAQA’s (very recent) misguided interpretation of the credit accumulation model (RSA, 2014), which I discussed in the first three chapters of this study and to which I have alluded above, there is a tacit admission here that SAQA has failed to problematize, let alone to measure, the extent to which the NQF objective of facilitating progression and mobility within education and training pathways has been realised. The absence of empirical studies of how the NQF has facilitated the realisation of this objective – which is arguably unsurprising if, as argued in Chapters 2 and 4, the central objective of the NQF was to redress past inequalities – presents opportunities for further research beyond the current study, whether commissioned by SAQA, conducted by SAQA, or undertaken independently of SAQA by researchers and research institutions.

Methodological implications of the study

The derivation, from Robinson’s (2004) technique for tracking student progress through a five-year HE programme, of a model in Chapter 6 that enables one to track not just one programme but the entire gamut of programmes in a HE system over a defined period has provided a replicable mechanism for facilitating the measurement and assessment of student pathways. From the five-digit sequence developed in Chapter 6 one can ascertain at a glance precisely what the five-year trajectory of a student has been. So, for example, a student pursuing pathway 12270 entered HE the year after school (1 = first entry into HE), was retained in the system for the next two years (2 =

continued in the same programme), completed in the fourth year of the five-year period (7 = completed), and did not enrol in the fifth year (0 = not enrolled). The model offers a simple yet powerful shorthand for evaluating student progression and performance at individual and systemic levels.

The development, from this model, of a pathway typology that extends the temporal dimension embodied in the marker “continued in the programme” through the addition of a school-to-HE transition marker makes a further contribution to the methodology literature. Based on three binary pairs – timing of entry to HE (immediate / delayed – I/D); progress through HE (uninterrupted / broken – U/B), and five-year outcome (completion / non-completion – C/N) – the typology allows one to ascertain immediately, from a three-letter acronym, exactly what trajectory a student has followed. So, for example, a student who followed the IUC pathway entered HE immediately after school (I) and proceeded uninterruptedly (U) through the system to completion (C). Again, this methodology provides a useful shorthand for describing, at individual and systemic levels, student entry, progression and performance outcomes.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Some of the data limitations of the study were discussed in Chapter 4. But there is a further limitation which, while involving data, is of a more fundamental design nature.

The limitation in question concerns the *post facto* use of data collected for one research project in the service of another. The current study, while locating a thesis within a body of research on student pathways built up in a science council over a decade, is limited, even were it to represent the pinnacle of achievement in that area of research, by the design of the original study and the purpose for which the original data were collected. The larger study out of which the present study emerges was located within a multi-year, multi-institutional, twenty-project research and development programme¹⁷ that had as its focus teacher education. To press data collected in that context into the service of a study that focuses on the pathways of students not only into teacher education programmes but into all HE programmes is itself a limitation – even if such data were available.

But more significant a limitation is the overall research design. A study that seeks to track students from their final year of school into and through HE for just three years is bound to be inconclusive – notwithstanding the capacity evinced in the present study for extending the time-frame, with the assistance of HEMIS data, by a further two years. In comparison with the US studies reviewed earlier, which use the 1988 longitudinal study as their reference point, the timeframe of four years that circumscribes the present study is itself but a snapshot in time within a much longer process involving the transition from youth to adulthood and the progression from school to HE to the labour market with which that transition co-occurs.

¹⁷ See CEA, CEPD, EFT, HSRC and SAIDE (2005). Teacher education in South Africa. Proposal for a research and development programme to be conducted by a consortium comprising: Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD); Centre for Evaluation and Assessment (CEA), University of Pretoria; Education Foundation Trust (EFT); Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC); and South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE). Unpublished funding proposal submitted to the Royal Netherlands Embassy.

A further aspect of the research design which a study *ab initio* would ensure is the integrity of the qualitative component. The present study relied essentially on one (albeit lengthy) interview with each of ten students to constitute “case studies”, with an attempted (and, it transpired, largely unsuccessful) follow-up approach six years later to ascertain their study and labour market outcomes. Ideally, as adumbrated in the present study, case studies should constitute life histories of subjects which would notionally involve face-to-face interviews at strategic intervals over an extended period of time.

This limitation of the study leads to the recommendation, in the next section, regarding the need for more carefully designed panel studies.

RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE STUDY

The recommendations arising from the study are suggested by the last two of the four implications and by the second of the limitations discussed above.

Recommendation 1: SAQA research on student progression and mobility

The absence of any empirical studies on whether and how the NQF has facilitated student access to, and progression and mobility through, education and training pathways suggests that SAQA should either commission such research or itself conduct such studies. Without empirical evidence of the specific contribution of the NQF to such facilitation, SAQA cannot make any claims for the NQF having achieved one of its key objectives. Such research would also answer SAQA’s critics, for whom NQF facilitation of the achievement of progression and mobility in student pathways is an ideal rather than a measurable objective. A finding that the NQF can itself not lay claim to any successes in this regard which are independent of other factors that may have contributed to student progression and mobility would itself be useful in addressing the idealism criticism levelled against SAQA.

Recommendation 2: Replication of methodological model and typology

The model developed in Chapter 6, which allows one to track student progression through a HE system over a defined period, should be replicated in other HE contexts, whether institutional, national, regional, or international. Both primary and secondary research data are amenable to analysis through the lens of the model: the data generated by longitudinal survey-based studies; and those data contained in HE databases – as, in the South African context, the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS). Equally useful for HE policy-makers, managers and planners is the pathway typology derived from this model, which provides, at a glance, a snapshot of the timing of student entry into, the nature of student progression through, and the outcome of student enrolment in, HE.

Recommendation 3: Measured implementation of an extended curriculum

The third recommendation arises from the finding that the traditional, linear route into and through HE to programme completion – pursued, as the study has shown, by a third of students – has become the road less travelled. This phenomenon needs to be recognised by all universities and provision needs to be made for an extended curriculum as a viable alternative pathway through HE – *but not indiscriminately for all students and across all programmes*.

The Council on Higher Education (CHE, 2013) proposes the mainstreaming of an extended curriculum, while the South African National Development Plan (NDP) both acknowledges the importance of an extended curriculum and recognises the increased costs of graduating students which poor school education bequeaths HE (NPC, 2012: 40). State funding would obviously need to feature strongly in such provision; but in the context of nationwide student protests in October 2015 against fee increases and the concomitant demands for free HE, it remains to be seen whether there would be sufficient state consensus, let alone adequate Treasury support, to fund an additional year of study for a majority of students.

Quite apart from the funding implications of the wholesale introduction of extended curricula, however, the educational and psycho-social benefits of such a move need to be carefully weighed up. Should an additional year of study be added to a programme simply because the majority of students enrolled in that programme are unlikely to complete it in regulation time? Does such an approach not run the risk of further alienating students already alienated by virtue of their perceived cultural disassociation from the institution? Would an extended curriculum not legitimise, and lead to mainstreaming, mediocrity? The answers to these questions will assist in determining which students in which institutional contexts should be given the option of pursuing an extended curriculum.

The national policy objective must, in the final analysis, be to shift the balance from what is currently observed (the majority of students pursuing alternative pathways, including extended curricula) to what is ultimately desired: increasing the numbers of students following linear pathways – students who pursue programmes without interruption – to completion. The differences in completion rates observed in this study between those who study continuously and those who stop out demand nothing less. In other words, the DHET, together with higher educationists and policy-makers more broadly, needs to locate any policy decisions regarding the regulation of student progression into and through HE within a larger policy framework that includes short-, middle- and long-term targets geared towards meeting the larger socio-economic imperatives of the NDP.

Recommendation 4: Mainstreaming of panel studies

Chapter 4 alluded, in its outline of one of the limitations of the current study (the brevity of the four-year timeframe for data collection), to the need for a longer panel study – an implication arising also from the case study design limitation above.

The first of two recommendations made here is for the initiation of a panel study minimally of fifteen years' duration, preferably from Grade 9 (when students choose their subjects for the FET phase of schooling) to five years after the regulation-length longest HE programme (six years) has been concluded – which would notionally, for those who complete a six-year programme within the regulation period, be five years into employment (including the one-year practicum) So, for example, a study beginning in 2016 with a cohort of Grade 9 students would track them for the next 14 years, until 2030 – at which point it would be opportune (given the timeframe for the achievement of the NDP goals) to benchmark student progress from school into and through HE and thence into the labour market against the NDP goals and against national targets for educational achievement and labour market absorption.

A panel study of this kind would include life-history case studies of the kind outlined above. Such a study would provide researchers, educationists and policy-makers with a much fuller understanding of the range of dynamics underpinning the transition from youth to adulthood and its co-occurrence with the transition from basic education (Grade 9) to the FET phase of schooling (Grades 10 to 12) to HE and thence to the labour market and the attainment of at least a first job.

The deployment of the SES variable, as alluded to above, allows one to measure changes in student SES and class over time, serving as an important indicator of the impact of educational attainment on socio-economic transformation. This will be a key aspect to the research design of the proposed study.

The second recommendation here is that the panel study outlined above constitute the first in a *series* of cohort studies tracking students from Grade 9 – as is the practice with the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY). Such studies might be initiated triennially, enabling researchers and those responsible for the HE system to compare the progress of successive cohorts of students at the same points in their trajectories.

APPENDICES

1. Programme enrolments in 2006 of students who were in grade 12 in 2005

#	Programme area preference in 2005	Programme area enrolment in 2006	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Bus/com	Bus/com	63	12.3	40	16.8	28	14.1	131	13.8
2	NI/A	Bus/com	61	11.9	16	6.7	7	3.5	84	8.9
3	Engin	Engin	43	8.4	17	7.1	23	11.6	83	8.7
4	NI/A	Engin	31	6.1	19	8.0	11	5.5	61	6.4
5	NI/A	Soc sc	24	4.7	10	4.2	7	3.5	41	4.3
6	NI/A	Nat sc	22	4.3	10	4.2	3	1.5	35	3.7
7	Soc sc	Soc sc	12	2.3	8	3.4	9	4.5	29	3.1
8	Health	Health	10	2.0	6	2.5	6	3.0	22	2.3
9	Nat sc	Bus/com	15	2.9	4	1.7	2	1.0	21	2.2
10	NI/A	Health	7	1.4	8	3.4	6	3.0	21	2.2
11	NI/A	Hum	13	2.5	4	1.7	3	1.5	20	2.1
12	Nat sc	Nat sc	12	2.3	4	1.7	3	1.5	19	2.0
13	Engin	Nat sc	13	2.5	2	0.8	3	1.5	18	1.9
14	NI/A	Educ	9	1.8	5	2.1	3	1.5	17	1.8
15	Bus/com	Soc sc	7	1.4	5	2.1	4	2.0	16	1.7
16	Nat sc	Engin	8	1.6	5	2.1	2	1.0	15	1.6
17	Health	Bus/com	6	1.2	3	1.3	6	3.0	15	1.6
18	Health	Nat sc	7	1.4	3	1.3	4	2.0	14	1.5
19	Bus/com	Hum	9	1.8	1	0.4	2	1.0	12	1.3
20	Health	Engin	4	0.8	7	2.9			11	1.2
21	Health	Soc sc	3	0.6	2	0.8	5	2.5	10	1.1
22	Hum	Hum	3	0.6	5	2.1	1	0.5	9	0.9
23	Engin	Bus/com	7	1.4			1	0.5	8	0.8
24	NI/A	Bus/com; Hum	5	1.0	2	0.8	1	0.5	8	0.8
25	Soc sc	Bus/com	5	1.0	1	0.4	2	1.0	8	0.8
26	NI/A	Nat sc; Engin	5	1.0	1	0.4	1	0.5	7	0.7
27	Engin	Health	4	0.8	1	0.4	2	1.0	7	0.7
28	Engin	Nat sc; Engin	4	0.8	1	0.4	2	1.0	7	0.7
29	Soc sc	Nat sc	4	0.8	1	0.4	1	0.5	6	0.6
30	NI/A	Nat sc; Bus/com; Hum	2	0.4	3	1.3	1	0.5	6	0.6
31	Bus/com	Bus/com; Soc sc	3	0.6			2	1.0	5	0.5
32	Nat sc	Soc sc	3	0.6	2	0.8			5	0.5
33	NI/A	Nat sc; Engin; Hum	3	0.6	1	0.4	1	0.5	5	0.5
34	Soc sc	Engin	3	0.6	2	0.8			5	0.5
35	Engin	Soc sc	2	0.4			3	1.5	5	0.5
36	Hum	Bus/com	2	0.4	1	0.4	2	1.0	5	0.5
37	Educ	Educ	1	0.2	3	1.3	1	0.5	5	0.5
38	Hum	Soc sc	1	0.2	1	0.4	3	1.5	5	0.5
39	Health	Hum			4	1.7	1	0.5	5	0.5
40	NI/A	Bus/com; Nat sc	3	0.6	1	0.4			4	0.4

#	Programme area preference in 2005	Programme area enrolment in 2006	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
41	NI/A	Health; Soc sc	3	0.6			1	0.5	4	0.4
41	NI/A	Nat sc; Hum	3	0.6	1	0.4			4	0.4
43	Bus/com	Bus/com; Hum	2	0.4	1	0.4	1	0.5	4	0.4
44	Bus/com	Nat sc	2	0.4			2	1.0	4	0.4
45	NI/A	Bus/com; Soc sc; Hum	2	0.4			2	1.0	4	0.4
46	NI/A	Soc sc; Hum	2	0.4	1	0.4	1	0.5	4	0.4
47	Health	Educ	1	0.2	1	0.4	2	1.0	4	0.4
48	NI/A	Nat sc; Bus/com	3	0.6					3	0.3
49	Bus/com	Bus/com; Nat sc	2	0.4	1	0.4			3	0.3
50	Bus/com	Nat sc; Bus/com; Soc sc	2	0.4			1	0.5	3	0.3
51	Nat sc	Nat sc; Engin	2	0.4	1	0.4			3	0.3
52	NI/A	Bus/com; Soc sc	2	0.4	1	0.4			3	0.3
53	NI/A	Nat sc; Bus/com; Soc sc	2	0.4	1	0.4			3	0.3
54	NI/A	Nat sc; Bus/com; Soc sc; Hum	2	0.4			1	0.5	3	0.3
55	Soc sc	Soc sc; Hum	1	0.2	1	0.4	1	0.5	3	0.3
56	Nat sc	Health			2	0.8	1	0.5	3	0.3
57	Engin	Hum					3	1.5	3	0.3
58	Hum	Health	2	0.4					2	0.2
59	NI/A	Nat sc; Educ; Hum	2	0.4					2	0.2
60	NI/A	Nat sc; Soc sc	2	0.4					2	0.2
61	Bus/com	Educ	1	0.2	1	0.4			2	0.2
62	Engin	Engin; Hum	1	0.2	1	0.4			2	0.2
63	Health	Health; Soc sc	1	0.2			1	0.5	2	0.2
64	Hum	Engin	1	0.2			1	0.5	2	0.2
65	Nat sc	Hum	1	0.2			1	0.5	2	0.2
66	NI/A	Engin; Soc sc	1	0.2			1	0.5	2	0.2
67	NI/A	Health; Educ	1	0.2	1	0.4			2	0.2
68	Soc sc	Educ	1	0.2			1	0.5	2	0.2
69	NI/A	Nat sc; Health			2	0.8			2	0.2
70	Soc sc	Hum			1	0.4	1	0.5	2	0.2
71	Soc sc	Bus/com; Soc sc					2	1.0	2	0.2
72	Bus/com	Health	1	0.2					1	0.1
73	Bus/com	Nat sc; Bus/com; Soc sc; Hum	1	0.2					1	0.1
74	Educ	Bus/com	1	0.2					1	0.1
75	Educ	Health	1	0.2					1	0.1
76	Educ	Nat sc; Bus/com	1	0.2					1	0.1
77	Engin	Engin; Health	1	0.2					1	0.1
78	Engin	Health; Bus/com; Soc sc	1	0.2					1	0.1
79	Engin	Nat sc; Engin; Health; Educ	1	0.2					1	0.1
80	Engin	Nat sc; Engin; Soc sc; Hum	1	0.2					1	0.1
81	Health	Bus/com; Hum	1	0.2					1	0.1
82	Health	Nat sc; Engin; Hum	1	0.2					1	0.1
83	Health	Nat sc; Soc sc; Hum	1	0.2					1	0.1
84	Hum	Nat sc; Engin	1	0.2					1	0.1
85	Nat sc	Educ	1	0.2					1	0.1
86	Nat sc	Engin; Health; Hum	1	0.2					1	0.1

#	Programme area preference in 2005	Programme area enrolment in 2006	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
			n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
87	Nat sc	Health; Soc sc	1	0.2					1	0.1
88	Nat sc	Nat sc; Bus/com; Hum	1	0.2					1	0.1
89	Nat sc	Nat sc; Health	1	0.2					1	0.1
90	NI/A	Bus/com; Educ	1	0.2					1	0.1
91	NI/A	Educ; Soc sc	1	0.2					1	0.1
92	NI/A	Engin; Bus/com	1	0.2					1	0.1
93	NI/A	Engin; Educ	1	0.2					1	0.1
94	NI/A	Engin; Health; Educ; Soc sc	1	0.2					1	0.1
95	NI/A	Nat sc; Educ	1	0.2					1	0.1
96	NI/A	Nat sc; Engin; Soc sc	1	0.2					1	0.1
97	NI/A	Nat sc; Health; Soc sc; Hum	1	0.2					1	0.1
98	Soc sc	Nat sc; Bus/com; Soc sc; Hum	1	0.2					1	0.1
99	Soc sc	Nat sc; Engin; Hum	1	0.2					1	0.1
100	Bus/com	Nat sc; Engin; Bus/com; Hum			1	0.4			1	0.1
101	Bus/com	Soc sc; Hum			1	0.4			1	0.1
102	Educ	Soc sc; Hum			1	0.4			1	0.1
103	Engin	Bus/com; Soc sc			1	0.4			1	0.1
104	Engin	Nat sc; Bus/com			1	0.4			1	0.1
105	Health	Nat sc; Health			1	0.4			1	0.1
106	Hum	Bus/com; Hum			1	0.4			1	0.1
107	Nat sc	Soc sc; Hum			1	0.4			1	0.1
108	NI/A	Bus/com; Educ; Hum			1	0.4			1	0.1
109	NI/A	Nat sc; Engin			1	0.4			1	0.1
110	Soc sc	Bus/com; Soc sc			1	0.4			1	0.1
111	Soc sc	Bus/com; Soc sc; Hum			1	0.4			1	0.1
112	Bus/com	Bus/com; Soc sc; Hum					1	0.5	1	0.1
113	Bus/com	Educ; Soc sc					1	0.5	1	0.1
114	Bus/com	Nat sc; Bus/com					1	0.5	1	0.1
115	Bus/com	Nat sc; Bus/com; Hum					1	0.5	1	0.1
116	Educ	Nat sc					1	0.5	1	0.1
117	Health	Nat sc; Engin					1	0.5	1	0.1
118	Health	Nat sc; Health; Soc sc					1	0.5	1	0.1
119	Health	Nat sc; Hum					1	0.5	1	0.1
120	Health	Nat sc; Soc sc					1	0.5	1	0.1
121	NI/A	Health; Hum					1	0.5	1	0.1
122	Soc sc	Bus/com; Hum					1	0.5	1	0.1
123	Soc sc	Nat sc; Bus/com					1	0.5	1	0.1
124	Soc sc	Nat sc; Bus/com; Hum					1	0.5	1	0.1
Total			512	100	238	100	199	100	949	100

Source: Author

Key: Nat sc = Natural & mathematical sciences; Engin = Engineering & other applied sciences; Health = Health sciences; Bus/com = Business / commerce; Educ = Education; Soc sc = Social sciences & applied humanities; Hum = Humanities; NI/A = Not indicated or available; # = Number of preference-enrolment combination

2. Pathways of students into, through, and out of higher education, 2006-2010

Pathway pattern	Students pursuing pathway							
	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
12270	57	7.0	30	7.0	23	6.5	110	6.9
10000	54	6.6	34	8.0	14	4.0	102	6.4
12222	31	3.8	34	8.0	26	7.3	91	5.7
01222	29	3.6	12	2.8	12	3.4	53	3.3
12000	30	3.7	17	4.0	5	1.4	52	3.3
00001	29	3.6	12	2.8	9	2.5	50	3.1
01000	30	3.7	11	2.6	9	2.5	50	3.1
12227	21	2.6	16	3.8	13	3.7	50	3.1
01227	26	3.2	17	4.0	3	0.8	46	2.9
12700	17	2.1	16	3.8	9	2.5	42	2.6
12220	18	2.2	9	2.1	9	2.5	36	2.3
12200	20	2.5	4	0.9	11	3.1	35	2.2
00122	18	2.2	7	1.6	5	1.4	30	1.9
00012	15	1.8	9	2.1	1	0.3	25	1.6
15222	12	1.5	5	1.2	7	2.0	24	1.5
1271/70	10	1.2	6	1.4	6	1.7	22	1.4
00100	13	1.6	5	1.2	2	0.6	20	1.3
01200	13	1.6	4	0.9	1	0.3	18	1.1
15227	12	1.5	0	0.0	4	1.1	16	1.0
00522	9	1.1	2	0.5	2	0.6	13	0.8
01270	11	1.4	2	0.5	0	0.0	13	0.8
1275/70	5	0.6	5	1.2	3	0.8	13	0.8
1220	10	1.2	1	0.2	1	0.3	12	0.8
1522	8	1.0	4	0.9	0	0.0	12	0.8
15270	6	0.7	1	0.2	5	1.4	12	0.8
12757	0	0.0	6	1.4	5	1.4	11	0.7
12271/7	3	0.4	4	0.9	4	1.1	11	0.7
00010	7	0.9	3	0.7	0	0.0	10	0.6
05222	4	0.5	3	0.7	3	0.8	10	0.6
12271	7	0.9	0	0.0	3	0.8	10	0.6
11222	7	0.9	0	0.0	2	0.6	9	0.6
12252	4	0.5	3	0.7	2	0.6	9	0.6
15220	6	0.7	0	0.0	3	0.8	9	0.6
1271/75	5	0.6	2	0.5	2	0.6	9	0.6
00120	6	0.7	2	0.5	0	0.0	8	0.5
01275	7	0.9	1	0.2	0	0.0	8	0.5
12275	3	0.4	3	0.7	2	0.6	8	0.5
12752	3	0.4	1	0.2	4	1.1	8	0.5
15000	5	0.6	2	0.5	1	0.3	8	0.5
12122	3	0.4	2	0.5	2	0.6	7	0.4
12276	4	0.5	1	0.2	2	0.6	7	0.4
12522	3	0.4	1	0.2	3	0.8	7	0.4
12710	2	0.2	2	0.5	3	0.8	7	0.4
15700	5	0.6	1	0.2	1	0.3	7	0.4
16222	1	0.1	2	0.5	4	1.1	7	0.4
00005	4	0.5	2	0.5	0	0.0	6	0.4
00127	5	0.6	0	0.0	1	0.3	6	0.4

Pathway pattern	Students pursuing pathway							
	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
00152	5	0.6	1	0.2	0	0.0	6	0.4
01252	1	0.1	3	0.7	2	0.6	6	0.4
10012	5	0.6	1	0.2	0	0.0	6	0.4
10122	5	0.6	0	0.0	1	0.3	6	0.4
11227	1	0.1	1	0.2	4	1.1	6	0.4
00006	4	0.5	0	0.0	1	0.3	5	0.3
00520	2	0.2	2	0.5	1	0.3	5	0.3
05227	2	0.2	2	0.5	1	0.3	5	0.3
11000	2	0.2	2	0.5	1	0.3	5	0.3
12257	2	0.2	2	0.5	1	0.3	5	0.3
12262	2	0.2	2	0.5	1	0.3	5	0.3
12717	1	0.1	2	0.5	2	0.6	5	0.3
175/75/70	1	0.1	2	0.5	2	0.6	5	0.3
00015	2	0.2	2	0.5	0	0.0	4	0.3
01052	3	0.4	1	0.2	0	0.0	4	0.3
01225	3	0.4	1	0.2	0	0.0	4	0.3
05220	3	0.4	1	0.2	0	0.0	4	0.3
12527	3	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3	4	0.3
12570	2	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.3	4	0.3
12712	0	0.0	2	0.5	2	0.6	4	0.3
12750	3	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3	4	0.3
15200	2	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.3	4	0.3
15252	3	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3	4	0.3
00500	2	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	3	0.2
01226	1	0.1	1	0.2	1	0.3	3	0.2
01500	3	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.2
05000	2	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	3	0.2
11220	1	0.1	1	0.2	1	0.3	3	0.2
12012	3	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	0.2
12221	2	0.2	1	0.2	0	0.0	3	0.2
12622	2	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	3	0.2
12706	1	0.1	1	0.2	1	0.3	3	0.2
15527	0	0.0	2	0.5	1	0.3	3	0.2
16220	0	0.0	1	0.2	2	0.6	3	0.2
125/75/70	2	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.3	3	0.2
1275/75	1	0.1	0	0.0	2	0.6	3	0.2
00022	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
00052	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
00062	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
00101	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
00125	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
00150	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
01001	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
01012	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1
01122	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1
01152	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.1
01202	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1
01271	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.1
01527	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1

Pathway pattern	Students pursuing pathway							
	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
02222	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.1
02270	0	0.0	2	0.5	0	0.0	2	0.1
10001	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
10022	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
10200	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.1
10220	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
10222	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
10500	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.1
11252	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
11270	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.1
11275	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.1
12006	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
12020	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
12052	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1
12062	0	0.0	2	0.5	0	0.0	2	0.1
12100	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6	2	0.1
12202	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
12207	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
12212	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.1
12225	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
12226	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6	2	0.1
12500	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1
12575	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
12701	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1
12727	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1
12755	0	0.0	2	0.5	0	0.0	2	0.1
15257	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
15271	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.1
15622	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
15752	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
16700	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
17000	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
17570	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
0122/52	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
01227/5	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
01275/7	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
11271/7	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
122/522	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
1227/52	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.1
1271/75/7	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1
1271/76	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1
1275/71	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.1
15271/7	2	0.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
15275/7	1	0.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	2	0.1
1575/70	0	0.0	1	0.2	1	0.3	2	0.1
175/700	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6	2	0.1
00050	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
00106	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
00162	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1

Pathway pattern	Students pursuing pathway							
	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
00175	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
00252	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
00270	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
00505	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
00570	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
00612	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
00625	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
01006	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01010	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01112	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01150	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
01206	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01212	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01221	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
01250	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
01255	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
01512	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01520	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
01552	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
01557	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01570	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01622	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
01625	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
01700	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01752	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
02272	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
05022	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
05200	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
05225	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
05270	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
05520	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
05522	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
05527	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
05700	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
06006	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
06200	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
06520	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
10010	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
10015	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
10020	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
10110	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
10125	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
10225	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
10600	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
10620	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
10622	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
10700	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
11012	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
11152	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1

Pathway pattern	Students pursuing pathway							
	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
11200	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
11257	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
11500	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
11522	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
11527	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12005	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12015	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12022	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12027	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
12050	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
12120	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
12127	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
12201	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12206	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12210	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
12225	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12260	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12265	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12277	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12520	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12525	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
12552	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12557	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12762	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12770	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
15001	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
15002	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
15022	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
15122	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
15155	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
15207	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
15225	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
15226	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
15250	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
15276	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
15279	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
15500	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
15522	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
15550	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
15555	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
15557	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
15570	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
15575	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
15712	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
15717	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
16000	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
16122	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
16227	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
16257	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1

Pathway pattern	Students pursuing pathway							
	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
22222	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
25270	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
65271	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12/1/6220	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
12/1/6606	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12/1/7570	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
0001/12	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
0001/70	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
00012/5	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
001/155	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
0012/17/2	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
0012/52	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
002/72/70	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01/1570	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01/752/70	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01162/1	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
01222/2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
0125/71/7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
0127/57	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
0155/67	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
027/575	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
05227/5/7	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
06271/7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1/10001	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1/11052	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1/12152	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1/12207	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1/12227	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1/12250	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1/12512	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1/12700	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1/15222	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1/15227	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1/155/751/7	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1/15570	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1/522/571	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1/52270	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1/55270	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1/75270	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
11/1010	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
11/12/522/2	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
11/1527	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1125/70	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
11275/7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
115/600	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12/1/6000	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
122/5/71/70	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1222/52	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12221/7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1

Pathway pattern	Students pursuing pathway							
	Low SES		Middle SES		High SES		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
12222/6	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
12227/5	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1225/70	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1225/71	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1225/71/7	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1225/75	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1225/76	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12251/2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12252/6	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1227/5/71	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12276/7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
125/700	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
125/701	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
125/71/70	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
125/71/75	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
125/712	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
125/717	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
125/766	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12512/5	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1257/57	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1271/10	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12751/7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
12755/7	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1276/26/2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1276/70	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
15/5570	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
15/5700	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
15/7000	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1522/17/2	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1522/52	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1522/57	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1525/70	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1525/71	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1525/71/7	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1525/75	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1527/52	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
15276/7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
155/75/70	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
1555/70	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1571/70	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
1575/75	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
15755/7	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
16227/6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1671/70	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
1676/70	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
175/701	1	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.1
176/712	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
6527/67	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.1
Total	814	100.0	426	100.0	354	100.0	1,594	100.0

Source: Author; HEMIS database

3. Choice of life situation in 2008

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen
1	1	I feel that I can not choose much because my mother wants me to succeed an break the cycle of non-achievement in our family if I was able to choose I would sat at home and continue working at standard bank since I enjoyed my stay there
2	1	I am financially unstable and that does not allow me to live the way I want to
3	1	Because I was expecting to do my second level modules semester, not having to drop out and look for a job to finance my studies next year I was hoping to completing my degree in 3yrs time hopefully things will workout I feel if a workout I feel if a had internet excess things would be a lot easier would not just a computer
4	1	The present life situation dominated too much by technology. You have to made the latest cellphone & coolest cellphone blend in. Having all these means being loaded with cash. I'm from a finacially disadvantaged family, and for me to get a job and have money will not be convenient for my studies not studying in the field of my 1st choice was because of lack of information and lack of financial supporter that is why I'm saying I feel I did not choose my present life situation
5	1	I didn't choose to be employed only part-time and earn so little money I keep applying for full-time work but I don't get the jobs
6	1	At the moment I cannot say wether I will succeed or not I am feeling vulnerable because I can't find employment which makes things hard because I may not be able to continue with my studies in 2009
7	2	Firstly, at times I'm being forced to do what I should do but in certain cases, I proceed in what I think is best. To study distance is not that good I would love to have a lecturer that I see 24/7, but unfortunately I didn't qualify for health sciences I will still try my best
8	2	Because as a young man independance is a very crucial element in expressing yourself confidently I still get money from my parents which is limited and cannot cater for all my financial encounters for me to be able to finish school find a job and be able to provide for myself is very essential
9	2	Because I was not studying in 2007, reason being that I wanted change my field of study only to find that the course I wanted to study was already full and I had already de-registered the course I was studying
10	2	My parents still cant live with the fact that Im now a grown-up who can now decide on what to do or not so Im kind of in a mix-up life situation
11	2	Having not to do the best I can and having all the fun but little consenstration on my studies
12	2	Mainly due to the fact that a lot of passed already and looking at the level of achievement is very poor on my side my plan is to now restructure my life and hope to do well in the next academic year. If feel I have wasted good opportunities and a lot of time but still believe I can do better and achieve more
13	2	I am unemployed looking for a job and still waiting for my certificate at Corner Stone Call Centre training my present life is miserable because Im at home doing nothing about my life and some of my peer group are working, studying and Im doing nothing so I will be happy if I can be able to find a job for my self and be independent, I know that God will help me through these burden I'm carring on my shoulder
14	2	Family finacial problems my parents can't afford to pay my fees for this year which means that next year if I don't a bursary or any form of financial support I will be forced to drop-out I don't even know what we going to do about the fees of this year I don't recieve pocket money every month I only get money for rent and groceries
15	2	No control of life's directions & supprises
16	2	I have no been able to find the right job to support my studies and one that pays well if you can help me in any way in finding better employment please try
17	2	I really don't think I had much being in the current situation I was always pushed and told what is best for me when I really wasn't ready. I never had much time to think about my future, so when I realised I need to go somewhere in life, I jumped

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen
		with the idea in my head. I have no confidence or self-esteem, so I am nervous when the time comes to find a job
18	2	I know what I want but its difficult fo me to access the night job (in-service training) I need so I'm prepared to take jobs which can be linked to my field of study I want to be in a position where I can obseve how tourism is managed (management) because I have completed my 2 years of studying (theory) so I have to do my in-service training thank you
19	2	I've made clinical errors in my second year of study (2007)which I'm paying for now! and all that pressure is just getting to me now and its really hard from by today for me
20	3	Well, as a student, there are far too many responsibilities that come with being a student, you worry about this and that and most of the time; it place one under great pressure that leads to a constant change in life situations, there are certain things that you need to get or do that require you
21	3	Because I am now going to be in possesion to work according to my course although it was not my first option
22	3	I don't have control over my finance as how my dad feels if I don't pass this year
23	3	I intended on studying medicine but I applied late and was not enrolled for 2006 so I tried again and was accepted for 2008 but my parent refused as I had already started a degree in nursing and had recieved a bursary to study nursing
24	3	You are never completly in control of what happenes in your life, you must make the best choices with the life situation given (or available) to you. Stop blaming other people and do something yourself to improve your life
25	3	Life is a feild with great opportunities and its up to myself if wheather do I take the ball and soccer or do I seat back; waiting for something I dont even know; will come. I realised I shouldnt waste time and grab every opportunities given to me and to always try my but making my family if; I shouldnt worry about yesterday but today and not tomorrow as its another day; with other threats and opportunities. I will always succed. And to never give up in life
26	3	I am not impressed because I am struggling to buy the prescribed books and calckulator and that I am unemployed. I have to lend money for transport when I go to school, I would be much better if I got a job to provide for my self the things I need to improved my studies but I am gratfull that I went back to school
27	3	Because the money I get is not enough for my current life. My expenses exceed my current income therefor Im in depth half the time
28	3	Because my family were not supportive to wards my studies this year were I live was for away from school walking everyday and knocking off late and sometimes having lots of work but not being able to do them because I didnt have enough time and space to rest, but I am still having that hope that I will make it without their support I will make it to a point that I achieve and meet my requirement at the end, I wont stop till I reach there
29	3	This year was by far the worse year having to loose my sister and grandmother. My grandmother giving me her house I cannot maintain her house financially
30	3	I choose to study nursing for gueranteed job after studying, having a better chance I would do something I love to do and cofortable with becoming a nurse wasn't excatly my dream but I'll make it work
31	3	There are other factors that played a role to lead me where I am right now. For eg my family's financial situation parents guarding me
32	3	Well; I guess I let my circumstances at home; and in my social life interfere with my studies too much; but then again it is inevatible that if one does not have the much needed resources to effectively complete your studies then you are deemed to fail especially on this level of studying
33	3	Because all I want is to see my self dealing with publicity as time goes on and my main mandate is to work as a public relations that is why I choose to do that course over the previous years

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen
34	3	Studying to become an accountant was not my first choice of career I wanted to and still want to study law. My marks obtained for commercial law has proven that this might just be my calling. For now though I have to be satisfied with what I was offered
35	3	Financial needs of mine for the future to look after my brother have dictated a lot of my present life
36	3	I'm not sure I just took every opportunity that comes to me
37	3	My family is not financially secure enough for me to live the way I want to economically, but I enjoy having the friends I do, so socially, I am happy, but financially unhappy.
38	3	I just went for what is best in life. I would like that you guys can inform me more of where I can find it companies which offer internship I would really appreciate that. I would like to gain practical experience while working.
39	3	Parents influence my life
40	3	I would have liked to go to university, but money was an issue and it still is. So there wasn't really a choice to go somewhere.
41	3	I like the way my life is, my parents are very supportive of me but they are very over protective of us. So in some ways I do not always get to do things that I want to do.
42	4	Financial and personal reasons
43	4	Being able study what I want
44	4	The choices I've made towards life and the positive attitude I have self confidence I have in myself, respect for other people, the support I get from people around me, turning all the discouraging into something positive like inspiration
45	4	Since matriculation I learn a lot of things about life, how life can upbring a person. I having this present life make me realise that I've made a good decision, I am really happy where I am now, hope that everything my life is gonna go well, I'm living strong looking forward to have a good future ahead of me, thanks for letting me to be part of the search it really helps
46	4	Even though I'm not happy with the fact that I'm not working, I'm actually glad that I chose to study the course that I'm studying at the moment and every day I look forward to another day. Graphic design is very challenging and I learn more and more each and every lesson.
47	4	I wish I was at university studying full time so I could spend more attention on my studies working and studying at same time is very strange you pass your studies by chance don't have enough time to give it my best but I've accepted because it teaches me responsibility, discipline and hardworking
48	4	By choosing good career minerals surveying (mine survey) this career directed my dreams to be where I want them to be. Since I am sure that when I'm done with my studies I will get a good job
49	4	I would like to work part-time to help around the household financially but if I do then my studies will suffer due to time constraints I would have preferred to go into the music industry but financially it isn't viable I've recently changed from aeronautical engineering to industrial engineering due to a change in interests I still have passion for aircraft but I have a greater passion for business and industrial engineering gives more insight into the business side of engineering
50	4	Even though I did not enrol at an institution that I wanted to I proved myself to my parents that I can still achieve my goals studying at a different institution. My parents don't dictate my life but they just try to assist and help me whenever they can, everything that I do is for me and not for them. That's why I feel that I have able to choose my present life situation to a large extent I make my own decisions
51	4	To a high extent because I'm very happy about everything that is going except that I feel that my life will be much better if I had a job I really need a job because the money that my parents deposit for me every month it not enough but it ok because I'm living like other students and I know that they don't have money

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen
52	4	I decided what I wanted to study and how much effort I want to put into my work. I could just pass and keep everybody happy – but I choose to put a bit more effort into vasy & try to achieve higher. To keep me happy! Life is a choice.
53	4	I have been free and able to make my own decisions
54	4	My present life situation now is what I wanted in life that is to study and become succesful, have my own assets and live happy and support my family. I feel happy living my life studying!
55	4	This is what a wanted to become a professional since this makes life easy
56	4	Okay the main reason is because, maybe you might help me, I've applied for NESFAS since April, they havent approved it, but still I've registered and I feel like if I can atleast say what is haunting (eating) me, I might feel better I mean like I'm not working being put onhold to study what do you think. Believe me this is not a life at all
57	4	I can't afford to study full-time only for I work and study and I choose to do this and I like it, my free time is time away from work and is time for my social life and or to study so it's my own doing that the balance is more on social than study. I should only learn to make better choices
58	4	My girlfriend and father inspire me to keep moving forward and working hard
59	4	Because what I wanted was to study and now I am studying the cause of my dreams
60	4	Because I wanted to study my course at the university not to college then a university of technology
61	4	I needed the opportunity of telling people about my educational success although I haven't found me, now that you gave me this opportunity I am using it to an extent that I won't regret, I like the fact that you promise that my information will be kept in private and my family is treating me well I thank you for doing this research it made me relieved as my life has improved
62	4	Believing that education is the path to bringness with out the education I won't enough life I should have to
63	4	Because habits sometimes inhabits one in reaching ones full potential and optimum intellectual capacity utilisation
64	4	However the odds and challenges most enabled me to execute my planning efficiently, however for me there is so much I still would love to do, because of lack of some resources it is sometimes difficulty further more not only for myself but so to help other around and behind me thanx
65	4	I have tried to study for exams, so that I pass, I managed to pass all the subjects I qualified for, its only one subject I didn't qualify to write exam for. But so far I am happy with my present life situation
66	4	I am dedicated and determined especially when it comes to my school work I always make a time management plan so that I manage my time effectively so to get some time for other social activities I choose to do anything that I want to do and I always do it with pride responsibility and determination because I know that in doing so I can expect good results so I have been able to choose my present life situation
67	4	Because I choose this career and the institute I am studying in I am happy with the choices I have made in life so far
68	4	I want to help the human science research council to draft accurate information about the factors which affect students during the course of study and also factors which contribute to high level of drop out in south africa.
69	4	I know very well that I'm currently living the life I want of being independent I'm from a hard time through social relationship and close friends whom I socialise with so now I keep myself busy in avoiding any disturbance from my friends
70	4	I have the power to change or choose the things I do, I don't need self-pity because SA is alive with possibilities especially for the young people with every chance I get I make the best of it because I'm tired of living in poverty & blaming the govt or my society background
71	4	Because I've been able to pass all my subjects for semester being confident to do something positive in life
72	4	It is because of what I experienced to do in upcoming years after I finished my

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen
		studies. I went to diege the situation of where I cave from.
73	4	Being positive toward lyf and look at life differently from previously . Happiness is very important to everyone everytime and again we deserve to be have and to live our lives. School is also the most part of my life and which I want it to stay like that, I want to be a very successful woman and a business woman too. And be able to be independent and live my life on my terms
74	4	All my decisions were made by me with little influnce or advice from other sources
75	4	Because if I have not passed my first year last year I would have not been in this situation of being happy, so I am glad I have passed my first year at college because if I had not passed maybe I would have not studing
76	4	My studies keeps me very busy during a 24-hours day I feel that sometimes if one could have a 30-hours day and three weekend days it could be nice to catch up
77	4	Both my parents are not working therefore we have financial problems I have to hustle to get what I want
78	4	The academic objectives that I've set myself at the beginning of 2005 have been reached more than set standard my aim is to complete degree within predetermined duration and up to so far things are going well and I'm left with only 3rd year last semester work to graduate next year April. This form part of greater positive base for successful future in entering job market I am delighten with this choice but aim high
79	4	Knowing I don't have to prove anything to anyone and that life is a journey and you don't have to rush to anything
80	4	My present life is struggling but as I said that I'm trying to keep myself positive. I'm still looking for my field which is accounting or music both I did not het to them coz of results reasons but I'm not gonna give up because I know that my God is my way, life and he knows my future. Thank you
81	4	I have pass studies well this semester. I also want apply for the job when the school is closed
82	4	Because I'am leaving an healthy positive life style and I'am doing very well in school
83	4	Because I have more goal and aims in life that I have not achieve at this time but when the goes on I would be what I had dream of all this years
84	4	My parents was contributing positively for me to choose whatever I wanted to do after Gr 12 they also had a positive outlook on further studies and lead me into that direction since I was a little girl
85	4	My academy life is still in motion, so it's still possible for me to reach my goal & be successful as I plan to be
86	4	To the extent that I can do and be anything that I want and at any time
87	4	Because last two years I didn't know what to do with my life, thinking that I have no career after loosing my mother in 2004 December 5, now I'm living only with my grandmother she's supporting me with oldpension grants, me I'm teaching old people in my community, that is where I got money to study at UNISA, I'm willing to continue teaching old people so I will continue with my studies.
88	4	It is because I adapted the situation and also the course that I am doing this year, although it was not my first choice to do teachers course but at last I end up enjoying it, I am feel good because I am at the university and that makes me feel proud of myself
89	5	I make the most of bad situations and focus on the positives rather than the negative aspects
90	5	My parents have brought me up very well and in a healthy family environment they have stood by me every step of the way evry step of the way and have influenced me in a positive way I have been given the opportunity to study what I have a passion for
91	5	Because I am studying for what I realy love and I am perfoming pretty well so far my biggest achievement know is that I have only two subjects left know
92	5	Because at present I'm doing fine with the life I'm living. I do things I want to do

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen
		not because someone says lets do that not that. I won't go to a place I don't want to go just to please someone
93	5	Even though there were some uncertainties from my parent about the choice of field at study but I insisted in doing it and now we all agree that it is the perfect field at study for me.
94	5	I was able to choose what and where I wanted to study I was also able I am able to choose how hard I want to study, what my goals are for my life thanks to my eduaction (school university) and my parents I am able to choose what I want to do with my life! The only thing I couldn't choose was my financial situation, but it works out OK
95	5	It is because at the end of the day I'm going to do what I like most to work with people helping them to live the healthy life that will make me stay healthy and happy too people outside are sick because they lack knowledge of what they should do or not to do about their health
96	5	I was able to perfrom well in my pass 2 years of study and therefore allowed to study this year. Also the fact that I opened up my own business in which I can make my own pocket money as well as I can work at flexible hours and when I want to. I really enjoy what Im doing & I have very supportive family
97	5	I have options to, I could have not gone back to school and gone seek employment, but because I told myself that no I should not rush to seek employment because if I do get one it will be hard for me to put a lot of energy in my studies and also I looked at my neighbourhood and saw that the not many people you can look up too and say that my role model. I want to be different pave the way for other so they can see that success is for everyone, its up to you to decide how successful u want to be
98	5	Because I will never do something which I am not happy with & whatever I do I like to do it it well no-one forced me to do anything I make my own (with advice of course) because I know my abilities & capabilities
99	5	Being able to make my own choices regarding my studies and my life. Not being pressured by anyone to achieve something but just doing it for myself
100	5	My parents support me and want me to be a successfull corner woman like my older sister who is making a name for herself in the working world. I love my courses and chose them myself based upon what I am capable of doing
101	5	I feel good about the present moment; about the challenges that I am facing right now. Now I feel deeply sabitiesed and fulfilled with the out come that may arise after completing this year but I cannot say I do trustmyself important to what I am doing because I there are boundries and limits; which scare me most of time; when coming to the last year or final year. Focus on the positive of my life
102	5	I am living a life that I always wanted to live. Everything didn't happen the way I thought it would, but the turn out is the same as I expected it to be. I have a bursary and studying what I wanted to study. Even though there were circumstances along the way, I made my choise against all adds to be where I am today and helping others to achieve the same.
103	5	I moved away from home and without my parents guidance I didn't have self-control and I failed some of my subjects hence I moved campuses from university to technikon now I getting my distinctions and I've improved because I am living at home I feel that it's because of my mind set that I am in that situation and also my environment of cause
104	5	I made the decision to study in grade 12 and that's what I am busy and finishing this year yeah
105	5	Well, I believe that success comes with a will to achieve great things and by believing i yourself and never giving up, you will never fail. I as my own person decide on what I feel is right for me, and if failure is a consequence of any action, you should get up and do it all over again, which is why I live a purpose driven lifestyle
106	5	Because since I was growing up I always wanted to study at an institution, have a degree so that I can improve my current life situation I also believe that I am destined for bigger things. The other thing is my mom, she is able to help out now, maybe later it will be worse than now, cheers

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen
107	5	My studies are going well even though there are certain obstacles but I am able to overcome them I am even able to do odd jobs during weekends and holidays
108	5	The main reason is that I don't want to disappoint myself and my parent, so I have to keep on studying very hard until I've fulfilled my dreams I've learned that knowledge is power and without education I'm nothing. I'm a very hard worker, and I hope to get a job someday (like your company for instance)
109	5	Because life its all about choices and when an opportunity comes you have to grab it life is a very tremendow opportunity that you have to take risk as it comes once in a life time and not to regret as you take a step/decision, my parents always guide me to do the right thing by talking to me all the time that makes me very addictive to the life that I am in because you will never know what might happen tomorrow
110	5	First let me start by saying my parents are very open and easily to talk to they don't force you into something you don't love doing so my life situation is very good and I love it coz I found the good foundation, from my parents everything I'm currently doing is by my choice and I don't regret it thank you
111	5	Because no one influenced me to study the course I'm studying and I still have the full support of my family in all decisions I make regarding my life, studies or otherwise
112	5	Having good grades in my theoritical component of the diploma (S4) which enabled me to obtain better practical training in a great company and straight after completion of S4 studies. For the fact that in my plannings when I was doing secondary schooling are well followed and I'm living my dream, lastly what really helped me is the confidence, motivation, guadance from lecture and help from the Almighty (God) hope this questionnaire provides you with the information you were expecting an answers
113	5	Everything that I'm currently is everything that I have always wanted to do in my life. I performed very bad during my 2006 academic year so I promised myself I will make it up and I did now I can where I'm going and I am very close to my destiny of becoming an internal auditor. I have been able to choose my own life as no one pushed me or persuaded me to become what I am only with the help and support of my parents. Everything is going perfect for me thank you I wish this research could continue
114	5	I want to improve my comunity and my parents life style. I want to prove to young community of my place that if you want to achieve something you will achieve it without your parents working or not
115	5	My desired future plans are promising
116	5	I have always wanted to spend my life studying because of the passion I have for school this will not only provide me with qualifications but will also open many opportunities for me in life. And I'm happy with present life that I have chosen
117	5	I decided to associate my self with the wise guys, so that I can be wise, because if you associate your self with the stupid you'll be corrupted
118	5	The way I performed in high school paved the path to where I am today and the hard work which I did back then was total under my control to perform well.
119	5	Because past decisions have allowed me to manipulate my present life situation, as this too is sure to have a similar if no better outcome
120	5	I love the work I'm doing and I love to study further when I have my degree in management I can move higher up in the business and I can prove myself to the people I'm working for
121	5	It because I'm positive about how I feel about my present life situation and I know exactly what I want to become and I don't let my friends influence me in any kind of way whether it a positive or negative way. I don't like to be influenced by any one in any decision that I make, I choose to live my own life and not be told what to do unless if it good
122	5	It because I choose the path I want to follow and Im passionate and dedicated to what I do the path that I choose is flexible in a way that there is opportunity for short term as well as long term plan. And what I've learned through the years gives me the opportunity to choose more than one proffoson that I can follow or peisut
123	5	My matric results were good enough for all the fields of studying and although I

Student response #	Extent to which life situation was chosen	Reason for rating of extent to which life situation was chosen
		didn't have money for studying I probably could have obtained a bursary to enable me to study in any possible field
124	5	My parents gave me the choice without interfering
125	5	I performed good in the first semester, I even got a distinction. Through this results I can be able to apply for a bursary or if not, look for employment related to the qualification I am currently studying for. For I am running out of funds and I want to be independent
126	5	I have achieved most of my goals I'm studying and doing well I'm very happy with the way things have turned out I am heading in the right direction I do everything to the best of my ability I am very much motivated I go to church and I believe that whatever comes to me is a challenge and I'll be very much happy to say my life completes me
127	5	Im happy about the present life situation that I have chosen because I know that I can have many opportunities through job entrance etc
128	5	Because I'm doing what I want while other people discouraging even I enjoy to do to what people think is crazy to study in Zimbabwe people see it as a joke because every one from Zimbabwe is coming to South Africa and I have decided to go to Zimbabwe but that is what I wanted to do it
129	5	I was not forced to do what I did not choose to do my decisions were purely my own I was always supported by friends and family in all my decisions I am in my current life situation due to my own choices in life
130	5	I am able to work and study and the transport around here it is flexible and I don't have to wake up in the early hours to get to school
131	5	Because even though I did not perform well last year I still have self confidence. I know that since I am still studying one day I will reach my goal of becoming a manager. I am very happy about the kind of life I'm living the fact that I'm a student makes me so happy because my main aim is to reach my goal. I'm really happy about my life
132	5	Is because I've worked so hard to get where I am today and I wish to do, more than this in the coming years because I see myself having a better future and succeeding in life
133	5	Because my parents gave me my own choice to decide what I want to study
134	5	Because I had to choose to study at UNISA, which is a distance learning or stay at home and register again in 2009 for the institution that I wanted to study at so I registered with UNISA rather than staying at home wasting time and doing nothing
135	5	Because I chose to pursue my career path and I chose to study very hard and smart, that is why I am very happy with my present life as I am doing what I planned out for myself and life. I enjoy what I'm studying now and am happy with my life and the way it is
136	5	I could have the privilege to go to school and university not many people get that chance in life I thank God and every body in my life for these privileges
137	5	I've always wanted to be a teacher but thought that keeping my doors open is a great idea since I'm measuring in English and Psychology which opens a lot of doors but my main reason is that we want to see change we want to see other students succeeding through hard work and dedication
138	5	As a young adult I make sure that I will never do something that will bring negative impact in my life at this stage I know very well what is good for me and what will make me succeed the passion I have is what pushes me to a positive life ahead
139	5	Your attitude determines your outcome. Every situation, good or bad, that comes your way is normally brought upon one self.
140	5	All things I have done or achieved is done through my own choice

Source: Author

4. Grade 12 Learner Aspiration Questionnaire 2005

TO BE COMPLETED BY LEARNER:												
Full names												
Surname												
Identity number												
Date of birth	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	M	D	D				
School name												

Dear Grade 12 Learner

As you approach your final school exams, you are no doubt considering your options for next year and thereafter. This questionnaire forms part of a study to investigate Grade 12 learner aspirations to enter higher education, specifically: whether they plan to enrol in teacher education programmes in higher education institutions; which institutions they plan to go to; and which factors influence this planning process.

Your school has been selected to take part in the study.

Please answer the questionnaire as honestly and fully as you can. The answers you give will be treated confidentially, and will be used for research purposes only. Your responses will help influence the ways in which the Department of Education and higher education institutions plan for teacher education.

If you have any questions about completing the questionnaire, please ask the educator who is administering it to help you.

Yours sincerely



Michael Cosser
 Project Manager
 Tel. 012 302-2924

HOW TO COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please follow the instructions very carefully. There are instructions before some questions and next to the answers for some of the questions. **These instructions – all of them in red – are very important.**
2. Please mark only one box in a list of answers unless the instruction reads “You may mark more than one box”. Mark a box by placing a cross in it – for example,

×
3. Where there is a list of items, each one comprising a scale, and you are asked to rate an item from, for example, “Not at all” to “To a very large extent”, please rate every item in the list.

To rate a scale item: if you were asked to rate the extent to which your parents / guardians had influenced your choice of higher education institution, and you felt that their influence had been “large” but not “very large”, you would mark as follows:

Not at all				To a very large extent
1	2	3	4	5
			×	

4. There is a code (e.g., V1.27) next to each block. Please ignore these codes – they are there for data capturing purposes only.
5. There are two columns on every page. Please be aware that questions frequently start in the left-hand column and move onto the right-hand column

SECTION 1: PRESENT SCHOOL SITUATION

1.1 In the first column, please indicate the level of the subjects at which you will be writing examinations for the Senior Certificate by placing the symbol H for Higher Grade, S for Standard Grade, or L for Lower Grade in the boxes next to your subjects.

In the second column, indicate the symbols you hope to obtain for these subjects in the Senior Certificate Examination (SCE).

In the third column, indicate your Grade 11 symbols for these subjects.

(If one or more of your subjects is not mentioned, please include it / them under "Other" at the end of the list)

	Level (H, S, or L)	Expected symbol in SCE	Grade 11 symbol	
				Agriculture and Nature Conservation
V1.1	☐	V1.66 ☐	V1.131 ☐	Animal Husbandry
V1.2	☐	V1.67 ☐	V1.132 ☐	Farm Mechanics
				Business, Commerce and Management
V1.3	☐	V1.68 ☐	V1.133 ☐	Accountancy
V1.4	☐	V1.69 ☐	V1.134 ☐	Business Economics
V1.5	☐	V1.70 ☐	V1.135 ☐	Economics
V1.6	☐	V1.71 ☐	V1.136 ☐	Shorthand
V1.7	☐	V1.72 ☐	V1.137 ☐	Typing
				Communication Studies and Language
				<i>Official Languages</i>
V1.8	☐	V1.73 ☐	V1.138 ☐	Afrikaans
V1.9	☐	V1.74 ☐	V1.139 ☐	English
V1.10	☐	V1.75 ☐	V1.140 ☐	IsiNdebele
V1.11	☐	V1.76 ☐	V1.141 ☐	IsiXhosa
V1.12	☐	V1.77 ☐	V1.142 ☐	IsiZulu
V1.13	☐	V1.78 ☐	V1.143 ☐	Sepedi
V1.14	☐	V1.79 ☐	V1.144 ☐	SeSotho
V1.15	☐	V1.80 ☐	V1.145 ☐	Setswana
V1.16	☐	V1.81 ☐	V1.146 ☐	Siswati
V1.17	☐	V1.82 ☐	V1.147 ☐	Tshivenda
V1.18	☐	V1.83 ☐	V1.148 ☐	Xitsonga
				<i>Other Languages</i>
V1.19	☐	V1.84 ☐	V1.149 ☐	Classical Greek
V1.20	☐	V1.85 ☐	V1.150 ☐	French
V1.21	☐	V1.86 ☐	V1.151 ☐	German
V1.22	☐	V1.87 ☐	V1.152 ☐	Greek
V1.23	☐	V1.88 ☐	V1.153 ☐	Gujarati
V1.24	☐	V1.89 ☐	V1.154 ☐	Hebrew
V1.25	☐	V1.90 ☐	V1.155 ☐	Hindi
V1.26	☐	V1.91 ☐	V1.156 ☐	Italian
V1.27	☐	V1.92 ☐	V1.157 ☐	Latin
V1.28	☐	V1.93 ☐	V1.158 ☐	Portuguese
V1.29	☐	V1.94 ☐	V1.159 ☐	Spanish
				Culture and Arts
V1.30	☐	V1.95 ☐	V1.160 ☐	Art
V1.31	☐	V1.96 ☐	V1.161 ☐	Dance
V1.32	☐	V1.97 ☐	V1.162 ☐	Graphic Art
V1.33	☐	V1.98 ☐	V1.163 ☐	Physical Education
V1.34	☐	V1.99 ☐	V1.164 ☐	Speech and Drama
				Human and Social Sciences
V1.35	☐	V1.100 ☐	V1.165 ☐	Biblical Studies
V1.36	☐	V1.101 ☐	V1.166 ☐	Geography
V1.37	☐	V1.102 ☐	V1.167 ☐	History
V1.38	☐	V1.103 ☐	V1.168 ☐	Islamic Studies
V1.39	☐	V1.104 ☐	V1.169 ☐	Jewish Studies
V1.40	☐	V1.105 ☐	V1.170 ☐	Library
				Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology
V1.41	☐	V1.106 ☐	V1.171 ☐	Electrician-work
V1.42	☐	V1.107 ☐	V1.172 ☐	Electronics
V1.43	☐	V1.108 ☐	V1.173 ☐	Fitting and Turning
V1.44	☐	V1.109 ☐	V1.174 ☐	Metalwork
V1.45	☐	V1.110 ☐	V1.175 ☐	Motor Body Repairing

V1.46	☐	V1.111	☐	V1.176	☐	Motor Mechanics
V1.47	☐	V1.112	☐	V1.177	☐	Motor Vehicle Construction
V1.48	☐	V1.113	☐	V1.178	☐	Plumbing and Sheet-metalwork
V1.49	☐	V1.114	☐	V1.179	☐	Technical Drawing
V1.50	☐	V1.115	☐	V1.180	☐	Welding and Metalwork
V1.51	☐	V1.116	☐	V1.181	☐	Woodwork

V1.201	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Ability to communicate well with others
V1.202	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Ability to work as a member of a team
V1.203	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Ability to solve problems

1.3 What kind of career guidance has your school provided? (Please indicate the three most useful forms of guidance provided by placing 1, 2 and 3 in the appropriate boxes. If "none", please mark the first box)

Physical, Mathematical, Computer and Life Sciences

V1.52	☐	V1.117	☐	V1.182	☐	Additional Mathematics
V1.53	☐	V1.118	☐	V1.183	☐	Biology
V1.54	☐	V1.119	☐	V1.184	☐	Computer Studies
V1.55	☐	V1.120	☐	V1.185	☐	Mathematics
V1.56	☐	V1.121	☐	V1.186	☐	Physical Science
V1.57	☐	V1.122	☐	V1.187	☐	Physiology

V1.204	☐	None
V1.205	☐	A list of higher education institutions
V1.206	☐	Information on the study programmes offered by different higher education institutions
V1.207	☐	A visit to one or more higher education institutions to expose you to different career options
V1.208	☐	A visit from one or more higher education institutions to expose you to different career options
V1.209	☐	A visit to one or more work places to expose you to different career options
V1.210	☐	A visit from one or more companies / organizations to expose you to different career options
V1.211	☐	A visit to a Career EXPO to expose you to different career options
V1.212	☐	Personal discussion with a teacher about career options
V1.213	☐	Personal discussion with a career guidance expert from outside the school about career options
V1.214	☐	Aptitude tests to assess what kind of career you were best suited for
V1.215	☐	Other (please specify):
V1.216		

Physical Planning and Construction

V1.58	☐	V1.123	☐	V1.188	☐	Bricklaying and Plastering
V1.59	☐	V1.124	☐	V1.189	☐	Building Construction

Services

V1.60	☐	V1.125	☐	V1.190	☐	Home Economics
V1.61	☐	V1.126	☐	V1.191	☐	Hospitality Studies
V1.62	☐	V1.127	☐	V1.192	☐	Travel and Tourism
V1.63	☐	V1.128	☐	V1.193 V1.196	☐	Other (please specify):
V1.64	☐	V1.129	☐	V1.194 V1.197	☐	Other (please specify):
V1.65	☐	V1.130	☐	V1.195 V1.198	☐	Other (please specify):

1.4 On a scale from "Very bad" to Very good", How would you rate the school's provision of career guidance?

Very bad						Very good
1	2	3	4	5		
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

1.2 How well do you think your school education has prepared you for adult life in terms of the following? (Please mark one box only in each row)

	Very poorly						Very well				
	1	2	3	4	5						
V1.199	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Ability to work with numbers and figures					
V1.200	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Ability to write well					

SECTION 2: ONE YEAR FROM NOW

2.1 What would you prefer your main activity to be one year from now? (Please mark one box only)

V2.1	1	☐	Studying
	2	☐	Working

- 3 ☐ Travelling overseas
 4 ☐ Not studying, working, or travelling
 5 ☐ I don't know

SECTION 3: ASPIRATION TO STUDY FURTHER

3.1 Are you planning to study further after Grade 12? *(Please mark one box only)*

- V3.1 1 ☐ Yes → Please go to Question 3.2
 2 ☐ No → Please go to Question 6.7
 3 ☐ I don't know → Please go to Question 6.7

3.2 At which institution type are you planning to study? *(Please mark one box only)*

- V3.2 1 ☐ A higher education institution *
 2 ☐ A Further Education and Training (FET) College → Please go to Question 6.7
 3 ☐ A private FET institution → Please go to Question 6.7
 4 ☐ An agricultural college → Please go to Question 6.7
 5 ☐ A nursing college → Please go to Question 6.7
 6 ☐ I don't know → Please go to Question 6.7

3.3 To what extent have the following factors influenced your decision to study at a higher education institution? *(Please mark one box in every row)*

- | | Not at All | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | To a very large extent | |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|---|
| V3.3 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | A desire to enter a particular profession |
| V3.4 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | An interest in studying in a particular field |
| V3.5 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | Your academic performance at school |
| V3.6 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | Needing to proceed to higher education to improve your chances of getting a job |
| V3.7 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | Higher education enabling you to earn more money one day |

*A higher education institution may be a university, a university of technology, a technikon, an institute of technology, a national institute for higher education, or a private higher education institution.

- V3.8 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ A teacher persuading you to study at a higher education institution
 V3.9 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ The status which a higher education qualification will give you
 V3.10 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Your parents / relatives wanting you to study at a higher education institution
 V3.11 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Your parents / relatives wanting you to get your studies over with so that you can support yourself and / or them
 V3.12 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ A boyfriend / girlfriend going to a higher education institution
 V3.13 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ People in your class intending to proceed to higher education
 V3.14 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Your parents / relatives having enough money to send you to a higher education institution
 V3.15 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Not knowing at this stage what you want to do with your life
 V3.16 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Your ability to get financial assistance (e.g., a bank loan, funding from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme, or the offer of a bursary or scholarship) to study at a higher education institution

3.4 When are you planning to study at a higher education institution? *(Please mark one box only)*

- V3.17 1 ☐ Next year → Please go to Question 3.5
 2 ☐ Not next year, but within the next three years → Please go to Question 3.6

3.5 To what extent have the following factors influenced your decision to study at a higher education institution next year? *(Please mark one box in every row)*

- | | Not at all | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | To a very large extent | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--|
| V3.18 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | Knowing what you want to study, and therefore being keen to enter higher education as soon as possible |
| V3.19 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | Wanting to study so that you can get a job as soon as possible |
| V3.20 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | Your parents / guardians wanting you to get your studies over with so that you can look after yourself and/or them |
| V3.21 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | Your parents wanting you to get your studies over with so that you can look after your family (parents |

- V3.22 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ / other relatives
Wanting to be independent and therefore to move out of the family home as soon as possible
- V3.23 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ A boyfriend / girlfriend proceeding to higher education next year
- V3.24 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Wanting to earn money as soon as possible
- V3.25 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ People in your class and / or friends proceeding to higher education next year
- V3.26 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Your parents / guardians having enough money to pay for your higher education
- V3.27 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Not having anything better to do than study further

3.6 How strong is your intention to study at a higher education institution? (Please mark one box only)

- | | Very weak | | | | Very strong |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| V3.28 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

SECTION 4: PREFERRED HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

→ If you are not proceeding to higher education, please go to Section 7

4.1 Which institution are you planning to study at? (Please rank your first three choices by placing 1, 2, and 3 in the appropriate boxes)

Public higher education institutions

- Eastern Cape*
- V4.1 1 ☐ Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (previously, University of Port Elizabeth and Technikon Port Elizabeth)
- 2 ☐ Rhodes University
- 3 ☐ University of Fort Hare
- 4 ☐ Walter Sisulu University of Technology (previously, Eastern Cape Technikon, Border Technikon, and the University of the Transkei)
- Free State*
- 5 ☐ Central University of Technology (previously, Technikon Free State)
- 6 ☐ University of the Free State

- Gauteng*
- 7 ☐ Tshwane University of Technology (previously, Technikon Pretoria, Technikon Northern Gauteng, and Technikon North West)
- 8 ☐ University of Johannesburg (previously, Rand Afrikaans University and Technikon Witwatersrand)
- 9 ☐ University of Pretoria
- 10 ☐ University of the Witwatersrand
- 11 ☐ Vaal University of Technology (previously, Technikon Vaal Triangle)
- KwaZulu-Natal*
- 12 ☐ Durban Institute of Technology (previously, Technikon Natal and ML Sultan Technikon)
- 13 ☐ Mangosuthu Technikon
- 14 ☐ University of KwaZulu-Natal (previously, University of Natal and University of Durban-Westville)
- 15 ☐ University of Zululand
- Limpopo*
- 16 ☐ University of Limpopo (previously, University of the North and MEDUNSA)
- 17 ☐ University of Venda
- Mpumalanga*
- 18 ☐ Mpumalanga Institute for Higher Education
- Northern Cape*
- 19 ☐ Northern Cape Institute for Higher Education
- North West*
- 20 ☐ North-West University (previously, University of the North West and Potchefstroom University)
- Western Cape*
- 21 ☐ Cape Peninsula University of Technology (previously, Cape Technikon and Peninsula Technikon)
- 22 ☐ University of Stellenbosch
- 23 ☐ University of the Western Cape
- 24 ☐ University of Cape Town
- Public distance education institutions*
- 25 ☐ University of South Africa (UNISA) (previously, UNISA and Technikon South Africa)
- Private higher education institutions*
- 26 ☐ Monash SA
- 27 ☐ Damelin
- 28 ☐ Boston City Campus
- 29 ☐ Varsity College
- 30 ☐ Lyceum
- 31 ☐ College Campus
- 32 ☐ Midrand Graduate Institute

V4.2 33 ☐ Other private institution (please specify name):

V4.3 34 ☐ Overseas / foreign institution (please specify name):

4.2 To what extent have the following factors influenced your preference for your first choice of institution? (Please mark one box in every row)

	To a very large extent					
	1	2	3	4	5	
V4.4	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It has a good reputation
V4.5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The school / faculty / department in which I plan to study has a good reputation
V4.6	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It has higher academic standards than do other institutions
V4.7	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It is the only institution that offers the programme I want to study
V4.8	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My parents / guardians / brothers / sisters / other relatives studied at this institution
V4.9	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My friends recommended it to me
V4.10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A teacher at school recommended it to me
V4.11	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It is near my home, where I want to live while studying
V4.12	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It is near the home of my relatives, with whom I want to live while studying
V4.13	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It is far away from home, and I want to live in residence / other accommodation while studying
V4.14	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The fees are lower than at other institutions
V4.15	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	There are better student clubs / cultural activities there than at other institutions
V4.16	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	There are better sporting facilities there than at other institutions
V4.17	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It allows me to study in distance (non-lecture-based) mode

SECTION 5: PREFERRED STUDY PROGRAMME

5.1 What type of qualification do you plan to study towards? (Please mark one box only)

V5.1 1 ☐ University Professional 1st Bachelor's Degree (e.g., BSc Eng; BA Soc Sc)

2 ☐ University General 1st Bachelor's Degree (e.g., BA, BSc, BCom)

3 ☐ University Certificate / Diploma

4 ☐ Baccalaureus Technologiae (B Tech)

5 ☐ National Diploma

6 ☐ National Higher Certificate

7 ☐ National Certificate

8 ☐ Other (please specify):

5.2 What profession are you planning to enter with the qualification you study towards? (If you are not sure, please mark the box)

V5.3

V5.4 1 ☐ I don't know

5.3 In which programme area do you plan to study? (Please rank your first three choices by placing 1, 2, and 3 in the appropriate boxes)

Natural & mathematical sciences

V5.5 ☐ Computer science

V5.6 ☐ Life & physical science

V5.7 ☐ Mathematical sciences

Engineering & other applied sciences

V5.8 ☐ Agriculture

V5.9 ☐ Architecture & planning

V5.10 ☐ Engineering

V5.11 ☐ Industrial arts

Health sciences

V5.12 ☐ Health sciences

Business / commerce

V5.13 ☐ Business / commerce

Education

V5.14 ☐ Education

Social sciences & applied humanities

V5.15 ☐ Home economics

V5.16 ☐ Law

V5.17 ☐ Librarianship

V5.18 ☐ Physical education

V5.19 ☐ Psychology

V5.20 ☐ Public administration / social services

V5.21 ☐ Social sciences

Humanities

V5.22 ☐ Visual & performing arts

V5.23 ☐ Communication

V5.24 ☐ Languages, literature

V5.25 ☐ Philosophy, theology

V5.26 ☐ I don't know

5.4 To what extent have the following factors influenced your preference for your first choice of programme area? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all			To a very large extent		
	1	2	3	4	5	
V5.27	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Interest in this area of study
V5.28	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to enter a profession for which a qualification in this area is needed
V5.29	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Knowing you can succeed in this area because of your academic performance at school
V5.30	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The reputation of the school / faculty / department in which you want to study
V5.31	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Opportunities of finding a job in South Africa after qualifying in this area
V5.32	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Opportunities of finding a job overseas after qualifying in this area
V5.33	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Ability to use a qualification in this area to contribute towards the development of the country and its people
V5.34	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The possibility of being offered a scholarship to study in this area
V5.35	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The amount of money to be made with a qualification in this area
V5.36	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A parent / relative having studied in this area
V5.37	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Parents / relatives having persuaded you to study in this area
V5.38	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Friends having persuaded you to study in this area
V5.39	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A boyfriend / girlfriend having decided to study in this area
V5.40	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Your role-model in life having studied in this area

SECTION 6: ENROLMENT IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES AND ENTRY INTO THE TEACHING PROFESSION

→ If you indicated in Question 5.3 that “Education” was your first

choice for study, please answer Questions 6.1 to 6.6. If “Education” was not your first choice, please skip to Question 6.7.

6.1 Which of the following persons / bodies has persuaded you to study education? (You may mark more than one box)

- V6.1 ☐ Teacher / career guidance expert in your school
- V6.2 ☐ Career guidance expert from outside your school
- V6.3 ☐ Teachers’ union (e.g., SADTU, NAPTOSA)
- V6.4 ☐ Other teaching body (please specify):
- V6.5

6.2 To what extent have the following factors influenced your decision to study education? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all			To a very large extent		
	1	2	3	4	5	
V6.6	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The flexibility that studying education gives you to enter another programme area
V6.7	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The range of career opportunities that a qualification in education opens up
V6.8	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The amount of money to be made in South Africa with an education qualification
V6.9	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The amount of money to be made overseas with an education qualification
V6.10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The ease with which you can be accepted into teacher education programmes rather than into other programme areas
V6.11	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Being assured of getting a job if you study education

→ If you indicated in Question 5.2 that you plan to enter the teaching profession, please answer Question 6.3. If not, please skip to Question 6.4.

6.3 To what extent have the following factors influenced your decision to enter the teaching profession? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all			To a very large extent		
	1	2	3	4	5	
V6.12	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A passion for teaching
V6.13	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to be a teacher since you were young
V6.14	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to become a teacher because of the influence of a teacher in your school
V6.15	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Your choice of subjects for the Senior Certificate having naturally led you into teaching
V6.16	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Family members / relatives having been teachers
V6.17	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Teaching being the only career open to you in the circumstances in which you find yourself
V6.18	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The flexible lifestyle which teaching provides
V6.19	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The usefulness of teaching as an entry point into other careers
V6.20	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The status that teachers have in the community
V6.21	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Not knowing what else to do with your life

6.4 For what level of teaching do you plan to achieve your education qualification? (Please mark one box only)

V6.22 1 ☐ Early childhood development (pre-school)

2 ☐ Primary school teaching

3 ☐ High / secondary school teaching

4 ☐ Special education (e.g., remedial teaching)

5 ☐ Other (please specify):

V6.23

6.5 What subject do you plan to teach after achieving your education qualification? (Please read the whole list before marking one box only)

General education and training

V6.24 1 ☐ Arts and culture

2 ☐ Economic and management sciences

3 ☐ Languages

4 ☐ Life orientation

5 ☐ Mathematics and mathematical literacy

6 ☐ Natural sciences

7 ☐ Human and social sciences

8 ☐ Technology

Further education and training

9 ☐ Agricultural science

10 ☐ Dance

11 ☐ Design and graphic art

12 ☐ Music

13 ☐ Speech and drama

14 ☐ Visual arts

15 ☐ Accounting

16 ☐ Business economics

17 ☐ Economics

18 ☐ Languages

19 ☐ Electrician work

20 ☐ Motor mechanics

21 ☐ Technical drawing

22 ☐ Geography

23 ☐ History

24 ☐ Life orientation

25 ☐ Mathematical literacy

26 ☐ Mathematics

27 ☐ Biology

28 ☐ Physical science

29 ☐ Computyping

30 ☐ Computer studies

31 ☐ Home economics

32 ☐ Hotel keeping and catering

33 ☐ Travel and tourism

34 ☐ Other (please specify)

V6.25

6.6 When do you plan to enrol in a teacher education programme? (Please mark one box only)

V6.26 1 ☐ In 2006

2 ☐ After achieving a qualification (e.g., a general degree) in another faculty / school (e.g., Arts, Science, or Commerce)

6.7 What kind of status do teachers enjoy in your community? (Please mark one box only)

	Very low	1	2	3	4	Very high
V6.27	☐		☐	☐	☐	☐

6.8 How committed are teachers in your school to their jobs? (Please mark one box only)

	Not at all committed 1	2	3	4	Very committed 5
V6.28	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6.9 How would you rate the quality of teaching in your school? (Please mark one box only)

	Very low 1	2	3	4	Very high 5
V6.29	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6.10 How professional are your teachers in carrying out their work? ("Professional" means they take their work seriously, they have good relationships with other teachers and with learners, and they want the best for their learners) (Please mark one box only)

	Not at all professional 1	2	3	4	Very professional 5
V6.30	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION 7: LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

7.1 How important is it to have a job which: (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all important 1	2	3	4	Very important 5	
V7.1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Enables you to earn lots of money?
V7.2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Gives you status (position in society)?
V7.3	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Uses your skills?
V7.4	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Is in line with your interests?
V7.5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Gives you independence?
V7.6	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Allows you to work as part of a team?
V7.7	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Gives you job security?
V7.8	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Is useful to society?
V7.9	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Allows you to help other people?
V7.10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Allows you to work where you want to?
V7.11	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Allows you to work

	1	2	3	4	5	
V7.12	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	when you want to? Allows you to work close to home?

7.2 How likely is it that the following will describe your situation ten years from now? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all likely 1	2	3	4	Very likely 5	
V7.13	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Working in a satisfying occupation
V7.14	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Studying towards a higher qualification
V7.15	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Being part of the middle management of a company / organization
V7.16	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Being part of the senior management of a company / organization
V7.17	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Being your own boss
V7.18	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Running your own business and employing other people
V7.19	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Married, with children
V7.20	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Living and working overseas

7.3 Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements. Ten years from now: (Please mark one box in every row)

	Strongly disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly agree	
V7.21	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		The crime situation in South Africa will have improved
V7.22	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		Poverty in South Africa will be greatly reduced
V7.23	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		(My) children will receive good quality public education in South Africa
V7.24	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		My family and I will receive good quality public health care in South Africa
V7.25	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		HIV/AIDS will be under control in South Africa
V7.26	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		The teaching of maths and science in schools will be greatly improved
V7.27	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		Public higher education institutions will provide a world-class education
V7.28	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		There will be greater opportunities for people to go to higher education

SECTION 8: PERSONAL INFORMATION

8.1 What is your gender?

V8.1 1 ☐ Male 2 ☐ Female

8.2 What is your age in years?

V8.2 Age

8.3 How would you describe yourself in terms of population group? *(Please mark one box only)*

V8.3 1 ☐ Black African
2 ☐ Coloured
3 ☐ Indian or Asian
4 ☐ White
5 ☐ Other (specify)

V8.4

8.4 What language do you speak most at home? *(Please mark one box only)*

V8.5 1 ☐ Afrikaans
2 ☐ English
3 ☐ IsiNdebele
4 ☐ IsiXhosa
5 ☐ IsiZulu
6 ☐ Sepedi
7 ☐ Sesotho
8 ☐ Setswana
9 ☐ SiSwati
10 ☐ Tshivenda
11 ☐ Xitsonga
12 ☐ A khoisan language
13 ☐ Other (please specify):

V8.6

8.5 What is your disability status? *(You may mark more than one box)*

V8.7 ☐ None
V8.8 ☐ Sight (blind/severe visual limitation)
V8.9 ☐ Hearing (deaf, profoundly hard of hearing)
V8.10 ☐ Communication (speech impairment)
V8.11 ☐ Physical (e.g., need a wheelchair, crutches or prosthesis; limb, hand usage limitations)
V8.12 ☐ Intellectual (serious difficulties in learning)
V8.13 ☐ Emotional (behavioural, psychological)
V8.14 ☐ Other (please specify):

V8.15

8.6 In which province is your family home? *(Please specify the postal code first)*

V8.16 Postal code of the area in which your family lives

V8.17 1 ☐ Eastern Cape
2 ☐ Free State
3 ☐ Gauteng
4 ☐ KwaZulu-Natal
5 ☐ Limpopo
6 ☐ Mpumalanga
7 ☐ Northern Cape
8 ☐ North West
9 ☐ Western Cape
10 ☐ Other (please specify: SADC and the rest of Africa / the world):

V8.18

8.7 In which province are you living at present? *(Please specify the postal code first)*

V8.19 Postal code of the area in which you are living

V8.20 1 ☐ Eastern Cape
2 ☐ Free State
3 ☐ Gauteng
4 ☐ KwaZulu-Natal
5 ☐ Limpopo
6 ☐ Mpumalanga
7 ☐ Northern Cape
8 ☐ North West
9 ☐ Western Cape
10 ☐ Other (please specify: SADC and the rest of Africa / the world):

V8.21

8.8 How far do you live from your school? *(Please mark one box only)*

V8.22 1 ☐ You are a boarder, and live on the school property
2 ☐ Less than 5km
3 ☐ 6-10km
4 ☐ 11-20km
5 ☐ 21-40km
6 ☐ More than 40km

8.9 How do you get to and from school every day? (You may mark more than one box)

- V8.23 ☐ By private car
V8.24 ☐ By taxi
V8.25 ☐ By bus
V8.26 ☐ By train
V8.27 ☐ By motorcycle
V8.28 ☐ By bicycle
V8.29 ☐ By foot
V8.30 ☐ Other (please specify):
V8.31

8.10 What is the highest level of education of each of your parents / guardians (where applicable)? (Please mark one box for each parent / guardian only)

- | Father / male guardian | | Mother / female guardian | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| V8.32 | 1 ☐ | V8.33 | 1 ☐ | No formal education |
| | 2 ☐ | | 2 ☐ | Some primary schooling |
| | 3 ☐ | | 3 ☐ | Grade 7 |
| | 4 ☐ | | 4 ☐ | Some secondary schooling |
| | 5 ☐ | | 5 ☐ | Matric / Grade 12 |
| | 6 ☐ | | 6 ☐ | Technical college certificate |
| | 7 ☐ | | 7 ☐ | Technikon certificate or diploma |
| | 8 ☐ | | 8 ☐ | University certificate or diploma |
| | 9 ☐ | | 9 ☐ | Technikon degree |
| | 10 ☐ | | 10 ☐ | University degree |
| | 11 ☐ | | 11 ☐ | I don't know |

8.11 What is the employment situation of each of your parents / guardians (where applicable)? (Please mark one box for each parent / guardian only)

- | Father / male guardian | | Mother / female guardian | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| V8.34 | 1 ☐ | V8.35 | 1 ☐ | Working for a company / organisation / government department |
| | 2 ☐ | | 2 ☐ | Working for him / herself, on his / her own |
| | 3 ☐ | | 3 ☐ | Working for him / herself and employing other people |
| | 4 ☐ | | 4 ☐ | Assisting someone else in his / her small business |
| | 5 ☐ | | 5 ☐ | Unemployed and seeking employment |

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 6 ☐ | 6 ☐ | Unemployed and not seeking employment |
| 7 ☐ | 7 ☐ | Working as a domestic worker / gardener |
| 8 ☐ | 8 ☐ | Working in the informal sector (as a vendor / hawker) |
| 9 ☐ | 9 ☐ | Working as a subsistence farmer |
| 10 ☐ | 10 ☐ | Retired / on pension |
| 11 ☐ | 11 ☐ | I don't know |

8.12 Approximately how much do your parents / guardians earn per month before deductions (where applicable)? (Please mark one box for each parent / guardian only)

- | Father / male guardian | | Mother / female guardian | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| V8.36 | 1 ☐ | V8.37 | 1 ☐ | No income |
| | 2 ☐ | | 2 ☐ | R 1 – R 400 |
| | 3 ☐ | | 3 ☐ | R 401 – R 800 |
| | 4 ☐ | | 4 ☐ | R 801 – R 1 600 |
| | 5 ☐ | | 5 ☐ | R 1 601 – R 3 200 |
| | 6 ☐ | | 6 ☐ | R 3 201 – R 6 400 |
| | 7 ☐ | | 7 ☐ | R 6 401 – R 12 800 |
| | 8 ☐ | | 8 ☐ | R 12 801 – R 25 600 |
| | 9 ☐ | | 9 ☐ | R 25 601 – R 51 200 |
| | 10 ☐ | | 10 ☐ | R 51 201 – R 102 400 |
| | 11 ☐ | | 11 ☐ | R 102 401 – R 204 800 |
| | 12 ☐ | | 12 ☐ | R 204 801 or more |
| | 13 ☐ | | 13 ☐ | I don't know |

8.13 Who of the following, where applicable, are studying at a higher education institution this year? (Please mark one box in each row)

- | | Yes | No | |
|-------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| V8.38 | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ | Father / male guardian |
| V8.39 | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ | Mother / female guardian |
| V8.40 | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ | Brother(s) |
| V8.41 | 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ | Sister(s) |

8.14 Are any of your brothers or sisters graduates of a higher education institution?

- V8.42 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

8.15 What kind of dwelling do you live in?
(Please read the whole list before marking one box only)

- V8.43 1 ☐ House or brick structure on a separate stand or yard
- 2 ☐ Traditional dwelling / hut / structure made of traditional materials
- 3 ☐ Flat in block of flats
- 4 ☐ Town / cluster / semi-detached house (simplex, duplex, triplex)
- 5 ☐ House / flat / room in back yard
- 6 ☐ Informal dwelling / shack in back yard
- 7 ☐ Informal dwelling / shack NOT in back yard, e.g. in an informal / squatter settlement
- 8 ☐ Room / flatlet not in back yard but on a shared property
- 9 ☐ Caravan or tent
- 10 ☐ Private ship / boat
- 11 ☐ Other (please specify):

V8.44

8.16 Is there a place in your home where you can study in peace and quiet?

- V8.45 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

8.17 What sources of information are there in your home? (You may mark more than one box)

- V8.46 ☐ None
- V8.47 ☐ Books and / or encyclopedias and / or journals
- V8.48 ☐ Newspapers
- V8.49 ☐ Magazines
- V8.50 ☐ Computer
- V8.51 ☐ Internet / e-mail access
- V8.52 ☐ Educational CDs
- V8.53 ☐ Educational DVDs / Videos
- V8.54 ☐ TV
- V8.55 ☐ Other ((please specify):
- V8.56

SECTION 9: FURTHER PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

9.1 This survey forms part of a longer investigation of the career pathways of learners in South Africa. We would very much like to include you in this longer study. Would you be happy for the research team to contact you in 2006 and again in 2007 to see what pathway you have followed after school? (THERE WILL BE A DRAW FOR PRIZES OF FIVE LAPTOP COMPUTERS AND TEN CELL-PHONES IN EACH OF THE TWO YEARS FOR SOME LUCKY RESPONDENTS!)

- V9.1 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

→ If “Yes”, please give us the address where we can contact you next year, as well as your other contact details:

V9.2 - V9.5	Postal address				
V9.6					
	Postal code				
V9.7	Home telephone number	()			
V9.8	Cell-phone number	()			
V9.9	Any other contact number	()			
V9.10	Signature				

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. WE HOPE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH YOU AGAIN IN 2006.

5. Learner Destination Questionnaire 2006

Dear Learner / Student

Please answer the questionnaire as honestly and fully as you can. The answers you give will be treated confidentially, and will be used for research purposes only. No names will be used in the report on the study. Your responses will help us to identify those factors which affect learner choices, and will influence the ways in which schools guide learner choices and in which institutions of further learning admit students to study programmes.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely



Michael Cosser
Project Leader

Tel. 012 302-2924

HOW TO COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE

- The questionnaire may look long, BUT YOU DO NOT NEED TO ANSWER EVERY SECTION. Please follow the instructions very carefully. There are instructions, **in red**, before some questions and next to the answers for some of the questions. **THESE FILTERS ARE VERY IMPORTANT**. You need answer only those questions which apply to you; please do not answer sections or questions that do not apply.

ALL LEARNERS / STUDENTS SHOULD ANSWER SECTIONS A, B, C, K AND L. ANSWER SECTIONS D, E AND F IF YOU ARE STUDYING (FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME), SECTION G IF YOU ARE NOT STUDYING, SECTION H IF YOU ARE WORKING (FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME), AND SECTION J IF YOU ARE NOT WORKING.

- Please mark only one box in a list of answers unless the instruction reads "You may mark more than one box". Mark a box by placing a cross in it – for example,

×

- Where there is a list of items, each one a scale, and you are asked to rate an item from, for example, "Not at all" to "To a very large extent", please rate every item in the list.

To rate a scale item: if you were asked to rate the extent to which your parents / guardians had influenced your choice of higher education institution, and you felt that their influence had been "large" but not "very large", you would mark as follows:

Not at all				To a very large extent
1	2	3	4	5
			×	

TO BE COMPLETED BY LEARNER:									
Surname									
Full names									
Identity number									
Date of Birth	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	M	D	D	
Postal address									
P.O. Box									
Street									
Town									
Postal code									
School attended last year									
Institution enrolled at in 2006 (where applicable)									

SECTION A: GRADE 12 RESULTS

A.1 Please indicate the symbols you achieved in the subjects you wrote for your Grade 12 / senior certificate examinations, indicating in the first column the levels at which you wrote the subjects (H for higher grade, S for standard grade).

Level	Symbol			
Agriculture and Nature Conservation				
V1.1	☐	V1.66	☐	Animal Husbandry
V1.2	☐	V1.67	☐	Farm Mechanics
Business, Commerce and Management				
V1.3	☐	V1.68	☐	Accountancy
V1.4	☐	V1.69	☐	Business Economics
V1.5	☐	V1.70	☐	Economics
V1.6	☐	V1.71	☐	Shorthand
V1.7	☐	V1.72	☐	Typing
Communication Studies and Language				
Official Languages				
V1.8	☐	V1.73	☐	Afrikaans
V1.9	☐	V1.74	☐	English
V1.10	☐	V1.75	☐	IsiNdebele
V1.11	☐	V1.76	☐	IsiXhosa
V1.12	☐	V1.77	☐	IsiZulu
V1.13	☐	V1.78	☐	Sepedi
V1.14	☐	V1.79	☐	SeSotho
V1.15	☐	V1.80	☐	Setswana
V1.16	☐	V1.81	☐	Siswati
V1.17	☐	V1.82	☐	Tshivenda
V1.18	☐	V1.83	☐	Xitsonga
Other Languages				
V1.19	☐	V1.84	☐	Classical Greek
V1.20	☐	V1.85	☐	French
V1.21	☐	V1.86	☐	German
V1.22	☐	V1.87	☐	Greek
V1.23	☐	V1.88	☐	Gujarati
V1.24	☐	V1.89	☐	Hebrew
V1.25	☐	V1.90	☐	Hindi
V1.26	☐	V1.91	☐	Italian
V1.27	☐	V1.92	☐	Latin
V1.28	☐	V1.93	☐	Portuguese
V1.29	☐	V1.94	☐	Spanish
Culture and Arts				
V1.30	☐	V1.95	☐	Art
V1.31	☐	V1.96	☐	Dance
V1.32	☐	V1.97	☐	Graphic Art
V1.33	☐	V1.98	☐	Physical Education
V1.34	☐	V1.99	☐	Speech and Drama
Human and Social Sciences				
V1.35	☐	V1.100	☐	Biblical Studies
V1.36	☐	V1.101	☐	Geography
V1.37	☐	V1.102	☐	History
V1.38	☐	V1.103	☐	Islamic Studies
V1.39	☐	V1.104	☐	Jewish Studies
V1.40	☐	V1.105	☐	Library
Manufacturing, Engineering and Technology				
V1.41	☐	V1.106	☐	Electrician-work
V1.42	☐	V1.107	☐	Electronics
V1.43	☐	V1.108	☐	Fitting and Turning
V1.44	☐	V1.109	☐	Metalwork
V1.45	☐	V1.110	☐	Motor Body Repairing
V1.46	☐	V1.111	☐	Motor Mechanics
V1.47	☐	V1.112	☐	Motor Vehicle Construction
V1.48	☐	V1.113	☐	Plumbing and Sheet-metalwork
V1.49	☐	V1.114	☐	Technical Drawing
V1.50	☐	V1.115	☐	Welding and Metalwork
V1.51	☐	V1.116	☐	Woodwork
Physical, Mathematical, Computer and Life Sciences				
V1.52	☐	V1.117	☐	Additional Mathematics
V1.53	☐	V1.118	☐	Biology
V1.54	☐	V1.119	☐	Computer Studies



V1.55	☐	V1.120	☐	Mathematics
V1.56	☐	V1.121	☐	Physical Science
V1.57	☐	V1.122	☐	Physiology
Physical Planning and Construction				
V1.58	☐	V1.123	☐	Bricklaying and Plastering
V1.59	☐	V1.124	☐	Building Construction
Services				
V1.60	☐	V1.125	☐	Home Economics
V1.61	☐	V1.126	☐	Hospitality Studies
V1.62	☐	V1.127	☐	Travel and Tourism
V1.63	☐	V1.128	☐	Other (please specify):
V1.64	☐	V1.129	☐	Other:
V1.65	☐	V1.130	☐	Other:

A.2 Please indicate the senior certificate result you obtained at the end of Grade 12 in 2005 (this is indicated on your statement of symbols and senior certificate). *(If you did not pass, please mark the final box)*

V1.131	1	☐	Passed senior certificate with matriculation endorsement (previously "exemption")
	2	☐	Passed senior certificate without matriculation endorsement
	3	☐	Did not pass

A.3 Please indicate the results interval as indicated on your statement of symbols or senior certificate. *(Please mark one box only)*

V1.132	1	☐	720 – 839
	2	☐	840 – 1049
	3	☐	1050 – 1259
	4	☐	1260 – 1469*
	5	☐	1470 – 1679
	6	☐	1680+ **

* passed with merit ** passed with distinction

SECTION B: CAREER GUIDANCE

B.1 What kind of career guidance did your school provide when you were in Grade 11 or Grade 12? (If none, please mark the first box in the list) *(Please indicate up to a maximum of three main forms of guidance received)*

V2.1 ☐ None

V2.2	☐	A list of higher education institutions
V2.3	☐	Information on the study programmes offered by different higher education institutions
V2.4	☐	A visit to one or more higher education institutions to expose you to different career options
V2.5	☐	A visit from one or more higher education institutions to expose you to different career options
V2.6	☐	A visit to one or more work places to expose you to different career options
V2.7	☐	A visit from one or more companies / organizations to expose you to different career options
V2.8	☐	A visit to a Career EXPO to expose you to different career options
V2.9	☐	Personal discussion with a teacher about career options
V2.10	☐	Personal discussion with a career guidance expert from outside the school about career options
V2.11	☐	Aptitude tests to assess what kind of career you are best suited for
V2.12	☐	Other (please specify):
V2.13		

B.2 On a scale from "Very bad" to "Very good", how would you rate the school's provision of career guidance?

Very bad					Very good
1	2	3	4	5	
V2.14	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION C: PRESENT SITUATION

C.1 Did you register to study at an institution / enrol in a school during 2006? *(Please mark one box only)*

V3.1 1 ☐ Yes
 ☐ No → Please skip to Question C.3

C.2 Have you since deregistered / dropped out? *(Please mark one box only)*

V3.2 1 ☐ Yes
 2 ☐ No

C.3 Which describes your present life situation best? (This is the activity on which you have spent most time in 2006) *(Please mark one box only)*

V3.3 1 ☐ At school

- 2 ☐ Studying
 5 ☐ Working
 6 ☐ Not working or studying, but looking for a job
 7 ☐ Not working or studying, and not looking for a job

SECTION D: STUDYING

IF YOU ARE ENROLLED IN AN EDUCATION INSTITUTION, FOR FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME STUDY, PLEASE ANSWER THIS SECTION. IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION G

D.1 Did you seek any career guidance when you enrolled at the institution where you are now studying? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.1 1 ☐ Yes
 2 ☐ No → Please skip to Question D.3

D.2 What form did this guidance take? (You may mark more than one box)

- V4.2 ☐ An aptitude test to see what I was best suited for
 V4.3 ☐ Discussion with a career counsellor
 V4.4 ☐ Discussion with a student adviser
 V4.5 ☐ Completion of a personality type inventory to see what field of study and career were best suited to my personality type
 V4.6 ☐ Discussion with a person from industry / a company, organised by the institution
 V4.7 ☐ A visit to a company, organised by the institution
 V4.8 ☐ Discussion with a lecturer / teacher at the institution
 V4.9 ☐ Other (please specify):
 V4.10

D.3 At which institution type are you enrolled? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.11 1 ☐ At a school → Please answer Section D.i
 2 ☐ At a Further Education & Training (FET) College or at a private FET institution → Please skip to Section D.ii
 3 ☐ At an agricultural education institution which is not a university → Please skip to Section H
 4 ☐ At a nursing education institution which is not a university → Please skip to Section H

- 5 ☐ At a higher education institution³⁹ → Please skip to Section D.iii

SECTION D.i: AT SCHOOL

D.4 What was your main reason for choosing to enrol in a school? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.12 1 ☐ I wanted to repeat Grade 12 to improve my marks in specific subjects to be able to proceed to higher education
 2 ☐ I failed Grade 12, and am repeating the year → Please skip to Question D.6
 3 ☐ My parents / guardians wanted me to repeat Grade 12 at school → Please skip to Question D.6
 4 ☐ I wanted to enrol in the school's post-Grade 12 Programme → Please skip to Question D.6
 5 ☐ The school I attended last year would not re-admit me so that I could repeat Grade 12 → Please skip to Question D.6
 6 ☐ I can earn higher marks at the school in which I am now enrolled → Please skip to Question D.6
 7 ☐ Other (please specify, then skip to Question D.6)
 V4.13

D.5 Please indicate the levels of the subjects for which you are trying to improve your marks by placing H for higher grade or S for standard grade next to the appropriate subjects.

	Level
V4.14	English
V4.15	Afrikaans
V4.16	Mathematics
V4.17	Biology
V4.18	Business Economics
V4.19	Physical Science
V4.20	Geography
V4.21	Economics
V4.22	IsiZulu
V4.23	History
V4.24	Other (please specify):
V4.25	Other:
V4.26	Other:

³⁹ A higher education institution may be a university, a university of technology, a technikon, a national institute for higher education, or a private higher education institution.

D.6 Are you enrolled in a government / state school? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.28 1 ☐ Yes → Please skip to Section H
2 ☐ No

D.7 What is your main reason for having chosen to repeat all or part of Grade 12 in an independent school? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.29 1 ☐ The standard of education is higher than in a state school
2 ☐ Being at an independent school gives me greater flexibility to pursue other activities
3 ☐ I have a better chance of improving my symbols at an independent school
4 ☐ My previous school did not allow me to repeat Grade 12
5 ☐ My parents / guardians wanted me to repeat all or part of Grade 12 in an independent school
6 ☐ The lack of violence in the independent school in which I am enrolled allows me to concentrate on my studies

PLEASE GO TO SECTION H

SECTION D.ii: AT AN FET COLLEGE OR PRIVATE FET INSTITUTION

D.8 What was your main reason for choosing to study at an FET institution? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.30 1 ☐ I wanted to improve my marks so that I could proceed to higher education
2 ☐ I was interested in studying in a field not offered by any other type of institution
3 ☐ It was too expensive for me to study at another type of institution
4 ☐ My parents / guardians / relatives studied at an FET institution
5 ☐ My parents / guardians / relatives persuaded me to study at an FET institution
6 ☐ I wanted to study in a field that would lead to my finding a job
7 ☐ I knew that I could achieve a qualification more quickly in the institution at which I am studying

- 8 ☐ The school I attended last year would not re-admit me so that I could repeat Grade 12
9 ☐ It was easier to gain admission to an FET institution
10 ☐ Other (please specify):

V4.31

D.9 Are you studying at an FET College? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.32 1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ No → Please skip to Question D.11

D.10 What is your main field of study at your FET College? (Please mark one box only)

- Business Studies**
V4.33 1 ☐ Secretarial
2 ☐ Administration (Public & Business)
3 ☐ Personnel (including Human Resources & Public Relations)
4 ☐ Financial Management
5 ☐ Marketing
Engineering Studies
6 ☐ Electrical (Heavy & Light Current)
7 ☐ Mechanical
8 ☐ Construction
Art & Music
9 ☐ Art & Design
10 ☐ Music & Dance
General Education
11 ☐ Grade 10 & 11 Programmes
12 ☐ Grade 12 (National Senior Certificate / NSC)
Utility Studies
13 ☐ Cosmetics
14 ☐ Haircare
15 ☐ Interior Decorating
16 ☐ Clothing Production & Textiles
17 ☐ Hospitality & Associated Industries
18 ☐ Tourism
Educare & Social Services
19 ☐ Educare
20 ☐ Other
V4.34 Other (please specify):
Other (please specify):
Other (please specify):
Other (please specify):

PLEASE GO TO SECTION H

D.11 What is your main field of study at a private FET institution? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.35
- Agriculture & nature conservation**
- 1 ☐ Primary agriculture
- 2 ☐ Secondary agriculture
- 3 ☐ Nature conservation
- 4 ☐ Forestry & wood technology
- 5 ☐ Horticulture
- Culture & arts**
- 6 ☐ Cultural studies
- 7 ☐ Design
- 8 ☐ Sport
- 9 ☐ Performing arts
- 10 ☐ Film, television & video
- 11 ☐ Music
- 12 ☐ Visual arts
- Business, commerce & management studies**
- 13 ☐ Marketing
- 14 ☐ Office administration
- 15 ☐ Public relations
- 16 ☐ Project management
- 17 ☐ Human resources
- 18 ☐ Finance and economics
- 19 ☐ Purchasing
- 20 ☐ Generic management
- 21 ☐ Public administration
- Communication studies & language**
- 22 ☐ Communication studies
- 23 ☐ Information studies
- 24 ☐ Language
- 25 ☐ Literature
- Education, training & development**
- 26 ☐ Adult learning
- 27 ☐ Early childhood development
- 28 ☐ Higher education & training
- 29 ☐ Occupationally-directed education, training & development practice
- 30 ☐ Schooling
- Manufacturing, engineering & technology**
- 31 ☐ Engineering & related design
- 32 ☐ Manufacturing & assembly
- 33 ☐ Fabrication & extraction
- Human & social studies**
- 34 ☐ Environmental relations
- 35 ☐ General social science
- 36 ☐ Industrial & organisational governance &

- human resource development
- 37 ☐ People / human-centred development
- 38 ☐ Public policy, politics & democratic citizenship
- 39 ☐ Religious & ethical foundations of society
- 40 ☐ Rural & agrarian studies
- 41 ☐ Traditions, histories & legacies
- 42 ☐ Urban & regional studies
- Law, military science & security**
- 43 ☐ Safety in society
- 44 ☐ Sovereignty of the state
- 45 ☐ Justice in society
- Health sciences & social services**
- 46 ☐ Preventive health
- 47 ☐ Promotive health & developmental services
- 48 ☐ Curative health
- 49 ☐ Rehabilitative health
- Physical, mathematical, computer & life sciences**
- 50 ☐ Physical sciences
- 51 ☐ Mathematical sciences
- 52 ☐ Information technology & computer sciences
- 53 ☐ Life sciences
- 54 ☐ Earth & space sciences
- 55 ☐ Environmental sciences
- Services**
- 56 ☐ Cleaning, domestic, hiring, property & rescue services
- 57 ☐ Hospitality, tourism, travel, leisure & gaming
- 58 ☐ Transport & logistics operations
- 59 ☐ Personal care
- 60 ☐ Wholesale & retail
- 61 ☐ Consumer sciences
- Physical planning & construction**
- 62 ☐ Physical planning, design & management
- 63 ☐ Building construction
- 64 ☐ Civil engineering construction
- 65 ☐ Electrical infrastructure construction

PLEASE GO TO SECTION H

SECTION D.iii: AT A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

D.12 At which institution are you enrolled? (Please mark one box only)

Public higher education institutions
Eastern Cape

- V4.36
- 1 ☐ Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
 - 2 ☐ Rhodes University
 - 3 ☐ University of Fort Hare
 - 4 ☐ Walter Sisulu University of Technology
- Free State*
- 5 ☐ Central University of Technology
 - 6 ☐ University of the Free State
- Gauteng*
- 7 ☐ Tshwane University of Technology
 - 8 ☐ University of Johannesburg
 - 9 ☐ University of Pretoria
 - 10 ☐ University of the Witwatersrand
 - 11 ☐ Vaal University of Technology
- KwaZulu-Natal*
- 12 ☐ Durban University of Technology
 - 13 ☐ Mangosuthu Technikon
 - 14 ☐ University of KwaZulu-Natal
 - 15 ☐ University of Zululand
- Limpopo*
- 16 ☐ University of Limpopo
 - 17 ☐ University of Venda
- Mpumalanga*
- 18 ☐ Mpumalanga Institute for Higher Education
- Northern Cape*
- 19 ☐ Northern Cape Institute for Higher Education
- North West*
- 20 ☐ North-West University
- Western Cape*
- 21 ☐ Cape Peninsula University of Technology
 - 22 ☐ University of Stellenbosch
 - 23 ☐ University of the Western Cape
 - 24 ☐ University of Cape Town

Public distance education institutions

- 25 ☐ University of South Africa (UNISA)

Private higher education institutions

- 26 ☐ Monash SA
- 27 ☐ Damelin
- 28 ☐ Boston City Campus
- 29 ☐ Varsity College
- 30 ☐ Lyceum
- 31 ☐ College Campus
- 32 ☐ Midrand Graduate Institute
- 33 ☐ Other private institution (please specify

V4.37 name):

- 34 ☐ Overseas / foreign institution (please specify name):

V4.38

D.13 Was this your first choice of institution for higher education study? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.39
- 1 ☐ Yes → Please skip to Question D.15
 - 2 ☐ No

D.14 Why did you not study at the institution that was your first choice? (You may mark more than one box)

- V4.40 ☐ My marks were not good enough to get me into that institution
- V4.41 ☐ There were no places in the programme I wanted to study
- V4.42 ☐ I changed my mind about studying at that institution because I wanted to live at home while studying
- V4.43 ☐ I changed my mind about studying at that institution because I wanted to live in residence / away from home while studying
- V4.44 ☐ I received a bursary to study at my present institution
- V4.45 ☐ The fees are lower at my present institution
- V4.46 ☐ There are better student clubs / cultural activities here
- V4.47 ☐ My present institution allows me to study in distance mode
- V4.48 ☐ Other (please specify):
- V4.49

D.15 To what extent did the following influence your decision to enrol at the institution at which you are studying? (Please mark one box in every row)

- | | Not at all | | | | | | To a very large extent | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | | | | |
| V4.50 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | It has a good reputation | | | | | |
| V4.51 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The school / faculty / department in which I am studying has a good reputation | | | | | |
| V4.52 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | It has higher academic standards than do other institutions | | | | | |
| V4.53 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | It is the only institution that offers the programme I wanted to study | | | | | |
| V4.54 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | My parents / guardians / brothers / sisters / other relatives studied at this | | | | | |

V4.55	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	institution My friends recommended it to me
V4.56	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A teacher at school recommended it to me
V4.57	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It is near my home, where I wanted to live while studying
V4.58	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It is near the home of my relatives, with whom I wanted to live while studying
V4.59	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It is far away from home, and I wanted to live in residence / other accommodation while studying
V4.60	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The fees are lower than at other institutions
V4.61	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	There are better student clubs / cultural activities here than at other institutions
V4.62	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	There are better sporting facilities here than at other institutions
V4.63	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It allows me to study in distance (non-lecture-based) mode
V4.64	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	I was awarded a scholarship to study here

D.16 How did you gain admission to the institution at which you are enrolled? (You may mark more than one box)

V4.65	☐	On the strength of my school-leaving results
V4.66	☐	Through the points system of the institution
V4.67	☐	As a mature-age student
V4.68	☐	Through being accepted into a bridging / foundation programme that will allow me to register for first-year courses next year
V4.69	☐	I received a sports bursary
V4.70	☐	Through my performance on special admissions tests / examinations
V4.71	☐	Through my performance on an aptitude test
V4.72	☐	Through Senate Discretion
V4.73	☐	Through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
V4.74	☐	Other (please specify):
V4.75		

D.17 What type of qualification are you studying towards? (Please mark one box only)

V4.76	1	☐	University Professional 1 st Bachelor's Degree
	2	☐	University General 1 st Bachelor's Degree
	3	☐	University Certificate / Diploma
	4	☐	Baccalaureus Technologiae (B Tech)
	5	☐	National Diploma

6	☐	National Higher Certificate
7	☐	National Certificate
8	☐	Other (please specify):

V4.77

D.18 In which programme(s) are you enrolled? (You may mark more than one box)

Natural & mathematical sciences	
V4.78	☐ Computer science
V4.79	☐ Life & physical science
V4.80	☐ Mathematical sciences
Engineering & other applied sciences	
V4.81	☐ Agriculture
V4.82	☐ Architecture & planning
V4.83	☐ Engineering
V4.84	☐ Industrial arts
Health sciences	
V4.85	☐ Health sciences
Business / commerce	
V4.86	☐ Business / commerce
Education	
V4.87	☐ Education
Social sciences & applied humanities	
V4.88	☐ Home economics
V4.89	☐ Law
V4.90	☐ Librarianship
V4.91	☐ Physical education
V4.92	☐ Psychology
V4.93	☐ Public administration / social services
V4.94	☐ Social sciences
Humanities	
V4.95	☐ Visual & performing arts
V4.96	☐ Communication
V4.97	☐ Languages, literature
V4.98	☐ Philosophy, theology

D.19 To what extent did the following influence your decision to enrol in the field in which you are studying? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all						To a very large extent				
	1	2	3	4	5						
V4.99	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Interest in this field of study					
V4.100	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to enter a profession for which a qualification in this field is needed					
V4.101	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Good performance in this field at school					

V4.102	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The reputation of the school / faculty / department in which I am studying
V4.103	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Opportunities of finding a job in South Africa after qualifying in this field
V4.104	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Opportunities of finding a job overseas after qualifying in this field
V4.105	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Ability to use a qualification in this field to contribute towards the development of the country and its people
V4.106	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The offer of a scholarship to study in this field
V4.107	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The ability to obtain a bank loan to study in this field
V4.108	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The ability to obtain funding through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme to study in this field
V4.109	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The amount of money to be made with a qualification in this field
V4.110	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A parent / relative having studied in this field
V4.111	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Parents / guardians / relatives having persuaded me to study in this field
V4.112	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Friends having persuaded me to study in this field
V4.113	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A boyfriend / girlfriend having decided to study in this field
V4.114	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A teacher at school having persuaded me to study in this field
V4.115	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Not being able to study in the field that was my first choice
V4.116	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Ability to follow a practical course of study
V4.117	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Ability to follow a theoretical course of study
V4.118	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My role-model in life having studied in this field

IF YOU ARE NOT STUDYING IN THE FIELD IN WHICH YOU INTENDED TO STUDY WHEN YOU COMPLETED THE GRADE 12 LEARNER ASPIRATION QUESTIONNAIRE LAST YEAR, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTION D.20. IF YOUR STUDY CHOICE HAS NOT CHANGED, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION D.21

D.20 Why are you not studying in the field in which you intended to study? (You may mark more than one box)

V4.119	☐	It does not offer me job opportunities in South Africa
V4.120	☐	It does not offer me job opportunities overseas
V4.121	☐	It does not allow me to contribute towards the development of South Africa and its people
V4.122	☐	My parents / guardians persuaded me not to study in that field
V4.123	☐	I am no longer interested in the field in which I intended to study
V4.124	☐	I could not get a scholarship to study in that field
V4.125	☐	I could not get a bank loan to study in that field
V4.126	☐	I could not get funding through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme to study in that field
V4.127	☐	I can earn more money in the field in which I am now studying
V4.128	☐	My marks were not good enough to get me into the field in which I wanted to study
V4.129	☐	My friends persuaded me not to study in that field
V4.130	☐	A teacher persuaded me not to study in that field
V4.131	☐	My boyfriend / girlfriend persuaded me not to study in that field
V4.132	☐	Other (please specify):
V4.133		

D.21 Are you studying at a private higher education institution? (Please mark one box only)

V4.134	1	☐	Yes
	2	☐	No → Please skip to Question D.23

D.22 To what extent have the following influenced your decision to study at a private institution? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all						To a very large extent				
	1	2	3	4	5						
V4.135	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		It has a better reputation than any public institution				
V4.136	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		It has a better reputation in my field of study than any public institution				

- V4.137 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ It will better prepare me for the job market than will a public institution
- V4.138 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ It will better prepare me for further study overseas than will a public institution
- V4.139 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ It offers better personal security than a public institution does
- V4.140 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ The fees are more affordable than at a public institution
- V4.141 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ It has more flexible admission requirements than do public institutions

D.23 In which mode of learning are you studying?
(Please mark one box only)

- V4.142 1 ☐ Contact mode (face-to-face, lecture-based learning) → Please skip to Section E
- 2 ☐ Distance mode (non-lecture-based learning)
- 3 ☐ Mixed mode (a combination of lecture-based and non-lecture-based learning) → Please skip to Question D.25

D.24 What was your main reason for choosing to study in distance mode? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.143 1 ☐ There is no contact-mode institution near my Home
- 2 ☐ I was not accepted by a contact-mode institution near my home
- 3 ☐ I could not afford to study in contact mode
- 4 ☐ I am working, and studying part-time
- 5 ☐ I have family responsibilities, and cannot attend Lectures
- 6 ☐ It was easier to be admitted to an institution through which I could study in a distance mode
- 7 ☐ I am able to study a specific programme or course in distance mode that is not available on a contact-mode basis

→ PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION E

D.25 What was your main reason for choosing to study in mixed mode? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.144 1 ☐ There is no contact-mode institution near my home
- 2 ☐ I was not accepted by a contact-mode

- ☐ institution near my home
- 3 ☐ I could not afford to study in purely contact mode
- 4 ☐ I work during the day / night, but am able to attend some lectures
- 5 ☐ I am working, and studying part-time
- 6 ☐ I have family responsibilities, and cannot attend lectures
- 7 ☐ The programme I am studying is flexible enough to allow students to study in mixed mode
- 8 ☐ It was easier to be admitted to an institution through which I could study in mixed mode
- 9 ☐ I am able to study a specific programme or course in mixed mode that is not available on a purely contact-mode basis
- 10 ☐ I like the combination of studying in distance mode and having some contact tuition
- 11 ☐ Other (please specify):

V4.145

SECTION E: PROFESSIONAL ASPIRATION

E.1 Which profession are you planning to enter once you have completed your studies?
(Please mark one box only)

- V5.1 1 ☐ Engineering
- 2 ☐ Architectural
- 3 ☐ Medical
- 4 ☐ Dental
- 5 ☐ Veterinary
- 6 ☐ Nursing
- 7 ☐ Academic
- 8 ☐ Teaching
- 9 ☐ Accounting
- 10 ☐ Legal
- 11 ☐ Social work
- 12 ☐ Clerical
- 13 ☐ Military
- 14 ☐ Other (please specify):
- V5.2 13 ☐ I don't know

E.2 To what extent have the following influenced your choice of profession? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all						To a very large extent				
	1	2	3	4	5						
V5.3	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A passion for the profession					
V5.4	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to enter the profession since you were young					
V5.5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to enter the profession because of the influence of a teacher in your school					
V5.6	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to make a difference to the lives of all South Africans through working in the profession					
V5.7	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Your choice of subjects for the Senior Certificate having naturally led you into this profession					
V5.8	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Family members / relatives having entered this profession					
V5.9	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	This profession being the only career option open to you in the circumstances in which you find yourself					
V5.10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The flexible lifestyle which working in this profession will allow you					
V5.11	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The status that the profession has in the community					
V5.12	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The certainty of finding a job in this profession					
V5.13	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The amount of money to be made in this profession					
V5.14	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Not knowing what else to do with your life					

→ IF YOU INDICATED IN QUESTION E.1 THAT YOU PLAN TO ENTER THE TEACHING PROFESSION, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTION E.3. IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION E.4

E.3 To what extent have the following factors influenced your decision to enter the teaching profession? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all						To a very large extent				
	1	2	3	4	5						
V5.15	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A passion for teaching					
V5.16	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to be a teacher					

V5.17	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	since you were young
V5.18	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to become a teacher because of the influence of a teacher in your school
V5.19	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Your choice of subjects for the Senior Certificate having naturally led you into teaching
V5.20	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Family members / relatives having been teachers
V5.21	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Teaching being the only career open to you in the circumstances in which you find yourself
V5.22	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The flexible lifestyle which teaching provides
V5.23	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The usefulness of teaching as an entry point into other careers
V5.24	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The status that teachers have in the community
						Not knowing what else to do with your life

→ PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION F

E.4 To what extent have the following influenced your decision NOT to enter the teaching profession? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all						To a very large extent				
	1	2	3	4	5						
V5.25	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The low status that teachers enjoy in the community					
V5.26	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Knowing I can earn more money in my chosen profession					
V5.27	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The attitude of the teachers in my school to their profession					
V5.28	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The difficulties that teachers in my school had in controlling learners					
V5.29	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The culture of violence in my school					
V5.30	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Family members / relatives having been teachers					
V5.31	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Knowing I can do something better with my life than become a teacher					

SECTION F: ENROLMENT IN A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME

→ IF YOU ARE ENROLLED IN A PROGRAMME IN THE EDUCATION FIELD, PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SECTION. IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION H

F.1 Which of the following persons / bodies has persuaded you to study in the education field? (You may mark more than one box)

- V6.1 ☐ Teacher / career guidance expert in your school
- V6.2 ☐ Career guidance expert from outside your school
- V6.3 ☐ Teachers' union (e.g., SADTU, NAPTOSA)
- V6.4 ☐ Other teaching body (please specify):
- V6.5

F.2 To what extent have the following factors influenced your decision to study education? (Please mark one box in every row)

- | | Not at all | | | | | | To a very large extent | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | | | | |
| V6.6 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The flexibility that studying education gives you to enter another programme area | | | | | |
| V6.7 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The range of career opportunities that a qualification in education opens up | | | | | |
| V6.8 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The amount of money to be made in South Africa with an education qualification | | | | | |
| V6.9 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The amount of money to be made overseas with an education qualification | | | | | |
| V6.10 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The ease with which you can be accepted into teacher education programmes rather than into other programme areas | | | | | |
| V6.11 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Being assured of getting a job if you study education | | | | | |

F.3 For what level of teaching do you plan to achieve your education qualification? (Please mark one box only)

- V6.12
- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| 1 | ☐ | Early childhood development (pre-school) |
| 2 | ☐ | Primary school teaching |
| 3 | ☐ | High / secondary school teaching |
| 4 | ☐ | Special education (e.g., remedial teaching) |
| 5 | ☐ | Adult education |
| 6 | ☐ | Other (please specify): |
- V6.13

→ IF YOU PLAN TO ENTER THE TEACHING PROFESSION, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTION F.4. IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION H

F.4 What subject do you plan to teach after achieving your education qualification? (Please read the whole list before marking one box only)

- General education and training*
- V6.14
- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | ☐ | Arts and culture |
| 2 | ☐ | Economic and management sciences |
| 3 | ☐ | Languages |
| 4 | ☐ | Life orientation |
| 5 | ☐ | Mathematics and mathematical literacy |
| 6 | ☐ | Natural sciences |
| 7 | ☐ | Human and social sciences |
| 8 | ☐ | Technology |
- Further education and training*
- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 9 | ☐ | Agricultural science |
| 10 | ☐ | Dance |
| 11 | ☐ | Design and graphic art |
| 12 | ☐ | Music |
| 13 | ☐ | Speech and drama |
| 14 | ☐ | Visual arts |
| 15 | ☐ | Accounting |
| 16 | ☐ | Business economics |
| 17 | ☐ | Economics |
| 18 | ☐ | Languages |
| 19 | ☐ | Electrician work |
| 20 | ☐ | Motor mechanics |
| 21 | ☐ | Technical drawing |
| 22 | ☐ | Geography |
| 23 | ☐ | History |
| 24 | ☐ | Life orientation |
| 25 | ☐ | Mathematical literacy |
| 26 | ☐ | Mathematics |
| 27 | ☐ | Biology |
| 28 | ☐ | Physical science |
| 29 | ☐ | Computing |

- 30 ☐ Computer studies
- 31 ☐ Home economics
- 32 ☐ Hotel keeping and catering
- 33 ☐ Travel and tourism
- 34 ☐ Other (please specify)

V6.15

→ PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION H

SECTION G: NOT STUDYING

IF YOU ARE NOT STUDYING AT PRESENT, PLEASE ANSWER THIS SECTION. OTHERWISE, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION H

G.1 What is your main reason for not studying at present? (Please mark one box only)

- V7.1
- 1 ☐ I do not need to study further because I have a job
- 2 ☐ I wanted to get a job so I could become independent
- 3 ☐ I wanted to get a job so I could save towards future studies
- 4 ☐ My marks were not good enough to allow me to study further
- 5 ☐ I failed Grade 12
- 6 ☐ My parents / guardians wanted me to get a job so that I could support myself
- 7 ☐ My parents / guardians wanted me to get a job so that I could support the family
- 8 ☐ I do not have the money to study further
- 9 ☐ I do not have a job, but believe I can easily find one without studying further
- 10 ☐ I can earn more money without having to study further
- 11 ☐ I am married, and my husband / wife supports me
- 12 ☐ I am pregnant
- 13 ☐ I have an illness which prevents me from studying further
- 14 ☐ I am tired of studying
- 15 ☐ Other (please specify):

V7.2

SECTION H: WORKING

IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED (EITHER FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME), PLEASE ANSWER THIS SECTION. IF YOU ARE NOT EMPLOYED, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION J

H.1 How did you find a job? (Please mark one box only)

- V8.1
- 1 ☐ Through a private employment agency
- 2 ☐ Through Department of Labour employment services
- 3 ☐ Through a labour broker
- 4 ☐ Through relatives
- 5 ☐ I joined the family business
- 6 ☐ Through personal contacts
- 7 ☐ Through a newspaper advertisement
- 8 ☐ Through placing my own advertisement in a newspaper
- 9 ☐ Through making telephonic, fax, or mail enquiries at workplaces, factories, and shops
- 10 ☐ By going from place to place to ask for work
- 11 ☐ Through my employer coming to the school to talk to students about jobs in that company
- 12 ☐ Through my employer coming to the school to find employees
- 13 ☐ With the help of the school
- 14 ☐ Through school teaching staff
- 15 ☐ Through contact with my employer through holiday jobs during my schooling
- 16 ☐ The school gave me a reference
- 17 ☐ Other (please specify):

V8.2

H.2 How many months did it take you to find a job?

V8.3 months

H.3 How important were the following in helping you to find a job? (Please mark one box in every row)

- | | Not at all important | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Very important | 5 |
|------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| V8.4 | | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Having Grade 12 |

- V8.5 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ The subjects you took for your Grade 12
- V8.6 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ The marks / symbols you achieved in Grade 12
- V8.7 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ The assistance which your school gave you towards your job interview
- V8.8 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Formal career guidance from your school
- V8.9 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Informal career guidance from a teacher at your school
- V8.10 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ References from people who know you well
- V8.11 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ The confidence which having a Grade 12 gave you for the job interview
- V8.12 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Your ability to speak English well
- V8.13 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ The reputation of your school
- V8.14 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Having gained some work experience through holiday / casual jobs
- V8.15 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Offering to work for no pay
- V8.16 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Your gender
- V8.17 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Your population group
- V8.18 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Being computer literate
- V8.19 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Having a personal contact at the workplace of your employer
- V8.20 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Having a valid driver's license
- V8.21 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Personal faith
- V8.22 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Your personality

H.4 Which describes your employment situation best? (Please mark one box only)

- V8.23 1 ☐ I am employed by a company / organization
- 2 ☐ I work for myself, on my own → Please skip to Question H.6
- 3 ☐ I work for myself, and employ other people → Please skip to Question H.6
- 4 ☐ → Please skip to Question H.6
- 5 ☐ I work in a partnership with one or more persons → Please skip to Question H.6

H.5 What kind of employer do you work for? (Please mark one box only)

- V8.24 1 ☐ Government / a public sector company / a governmental organization
- 2 ☐ A non-governmental organization / community-based organization
- 3 ☐ A private company

H.6 How many hours do you usually work per week?

V8.25 hours

H.7 Do you work full-time or part-time? (Please mark one box only)

- V8.26 1 ☐ Full-time
- 2 ☐ Part-time

H.8 What kind of employment are you in? (Please mark one box only)

- V8.27 1 ☐ Permanent employment
- 2 ☐ Temporary contract employment
- 3 ☐ I am a casual worker

H.9 What are the main goods produced / services delivered at your place of work?

V8.28

.....

.....

H.10 What is your occupation?

V8.29

.....

.....

H.11 How much do you earn per month before deductions? (Please mark one box only)

- V8.30 1 ☐ No income
- 2 ☐ R 1 – R 400
- 3 ☐ R 401 – R 800
- 4 ☐ R 801 – R 1 600
- 5 ☐ R 1 601 – R 3 200
- 6 ☐ R 3 201 – R 6 400
- 7 ☐ R 6 401 – R 12 800
- 8 ☐ R 12 801 – R 25 600
- 9 ☐ R 25 601 – R 51 200
- 10 ☐ R 51 201 – R 102 400

- 11 ☐ R 102 401 – R 204 800
12 ☐ R 204 801 or more

**IF YOU WORK FOR YOURSELF,
PLEASE ANSWER QUESTION H.12.
IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION
H.14**

H.12 Why are you working for yourself (either on your own or employing others)? (You may mark more than one box)

- V8.31 ☐ I could not find a job with the subjects I did for my Grade 12
V8.32 ☐ I could not find a job in formal employment
V8.33 ☐ I prefer flexible working hours
V8.34 ☐ I prefer to be my own boss
V8.35 ☐ It's better than having no job
V8.36 ☐ I have more opportunity to do the work I want to do
V8.37 ☐ I prefer working from home to working in an office
V8.38 ☐ I can earn a higher income than if I were in formal employment
V8.39 ☐ Employers want work experience, which I did not have
V8.40 ☐ I could not find a formal job because of affirmative action
V8.41 ☐ To help to create jobs for others
V8.42 ☐ Other (please specify):
V8.43

**IF YOU WORK FOR YOURSELF AND
EMPLOY OTHERS, PLEASE ANSWER
QUESTION H.13. IF NOT, PLEASE
SKIP TO QUESTION H.14**

H.13 How many persons do you employ?

V8.44 persons

H.14 To what extent do you use the knowledge and skills that you gained at school in your current job?

Not at all To a very large extent
1 2 3 4 5
V8.45 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

H.15 Is your job appropriate and linked to your

school qualification? (Please mark one box only)

- V8.46 1 ☐ Yes → Please skip to Question H.17
2 ☐ No

H.16 Why did you take the job? (You may mark more than one box)

- V8.47 ☐ I have not (yet) been able to find a job that is better linked to my level of education
V8.48 ☐ In doing this job I have better career opportunities
V8.49 ☐ I can gain valuable work experience in my current job
V8.50 ☐ I do not mind having a job that is not linked to my schooling
V8.51 ☐ I can earn more money in my current job
V8.52 ☐ My current job is more secure
V8.53 ☐ My current job is more interesting
V8.54 ☐ My current job provides more variety
V8.55 ☐ My current job allows me to work part-time or when I want to
V8.56 ☐ My current job allows me to work where I want to
V8.57 ☐ My current job allows me to support myself / my family
V8.58 ☐ I had to accept any work so that I could support myself / my family
V8.59 ☐ I have to accept work that is not closely linked to my studies at the beginning of my career
V8.60 ☐ Other (please specify):
V8.61

H.17 How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your work situation? (Please mark one box in every row)

- | | Very dissatisfied | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Very satisfied | |
|-------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|----------------|---|
| V8.62 | ☐ | | ☐ | | ☐ | | Content of work |
| V8.63 | ☐ | | ☐ | | ☐ | | Working conditions |
| V8.64 | ☐ | | ☐ | | ☐ | | Job security |
| V8.65 | ☐ | | ☐ | | ☐ | | Opportunity to use knowledge and skills acquired during schooling |
| V8.66 | ☐ | | ☐ | | ☐ | | Income |
| V8.67 | ☐ | | ☐ | | ☐ | | Opportunity to learn while working |

IF YOU ARE EMPLOYED BY A COMPANY / ORGANIZATION, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTION H.18. IF NOT, SKIP TO QUESTION H.19

H.18 How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your work situation? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Very dissatisfied						Very satisfied		
	1	2	3	4	5				
V8.68	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Promotion opportunities			
V8.69	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Equal treatment of all population groups			
V8.70	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Equal treatment across the sexes			
V8.71	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Equal treatment of disabled persons			
V8.72	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Benefits (e.g., medical aid, pension, housing allowance, etc.)			

H.19 Overall, how satisfied are you with your work situation?

	Very dissatisfied						Very satisfied	
	1	2	3	4	5			
V8.73	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐			

SECTION J: NOT WORKING

IF YOU ARE NOT EMPLOYED (WHETHER YOU ARE STUDYING OR NOT), PLEASE ANSWER THIS SECTION. OTHERWISE, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION K

J.1 Which of the following statements most accurately describes your present situation? (Please mark one box only)

V9.1	1	☐	I am looking for a job
	2	☐	I have given up looking for a job
	3	☐	I do not need to work → Please skip to Question J.7
	4	☐	I am studying → Please skip to Question J.7

J.2 For how many months have you been looking / did you look for a job?

V9.2 months

J.3 What have you done / did you do to look for work? (You may mark more than one box)

V9.3	☐	Mailed / faxed / e-mailed my CV to companies / organizations
V9.4	☐	Answered newspaper advertisements for jobs
V9.5	☐	Placed newspaper advertisements looking for a job
V9.6	☐	Made enquiries at workplaces / farms / factories / shops
V9.7	☐	Registered with a private employment agency
V9.8	☐	Approached the Department of Labour employment office
V9.9	☐	Gone from door to door looking for work
V9.10	☐	Waited at the side of the road
V9.11	☐	Asked friends / relatives for assistance
V9.12	☐	Nothing
V9.13	☐	Other (please specify):
V9.14		

J.4 What do you think are the main reasons for your not having a job? (You may mark more than one box)

V9.15	☐	There are no job opportunities (businesses, etc.) where I live
V9.16	☐	No employer wants me, because I don't have the skills / experience for the job
V9.17	☐	No employer wants people from my school
V9.18	☐	My level of education is not high enough
V9.19	☐	No employer wants people with skills in my subject areas
V9.20	☐	I don't know
V9.21	☐	I do not have any information on how or where to find work
V9.22	☐	I do not have money for transport to go and look for work
V9.23	☐	I do not have money to phone or fax in response to job advertisements
V9.24	☐	I do not have the confidence to approach employers to ask for work
V9.25	☐	Other (please specify):
V9.26		

J.5 To what extent have the following contributed to your unemployment? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all						To a very large extent				
	1	2	3	4	5						
V9.27	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My population group					
V9.28	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My gender					
V9.29	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My physical ability					

J.6 Which of the following would help you get a job? (You may mark more than one box)

V9.30	☐	Move to another area where there may be work
V9.31	☐	Get (more) practical training
V9.32	☐	Enrol for a post-Grade 12 qualification
V9.33	☐	Send my CV to employers / organizations
V9.34	☐	Make an appointment with employers / organizations to ask them for a job
V9.35	☐	Send my CV to an employment agency
V9.36	☐	Advertise in the newspaper that I am looking for a job
V9.37	☐	Get someone to help me write a good CV
V9.38	☐	Apply for more jobs than I have so far
V9.39	☐	Other (please specify):
V9.40		

J.7 How do you support yourself? (You may mark more than one box)

V9.41	☐	I am supported by a person / persons in the household in which I am currently living
V9.42	☐	I am supported by a person / persons (relative, boyfriend / girlfriend, family friend, etc.) not in the household in which I am currently living
V9.43	☐	I do odd jobs
V9.44	☐	I have a study bursary / loan / scholarship
V9.45	☐	Other (please specify):
V9.46		

SECTION K: PERSONAL INFORMATION

K.1 In which province is your family home? (Please specify the postal code first)

V10.1 **Postal code of the area in which your family lives**

V10.2	1	☐	Eastern Cape
	2	☐	Free State
	3	☐	Gauteng
	4	☐	KwaZulu Natal
	5	☐	Limpopo
	6	☐	Mpumalanga
	7	☐	Northern Cape
	8	☐	North West
	9	☐	Western Cape
	10	☐	Other (please specify):

V10.3

K.2 In which province are you living at present? (Please specify the postal code first)

V10.4 **Postal code of the area in which you are living**

V10.5	1	☐	Eastern Cape
	2	☐	Free State
	3	☐	Gauteng
	4	☐	KwaZulu Natal
	5	☐	Limpopo
	6	☐	Mpumalanga
	7	☐	Northern Cape
	8	☐	North West
	9	☐	Western Cape
	10	☐	Other (please specify):

V10.6

K.3 What is the highest level of education of each of your parents / guardians (where applicable)? (Please mark one box in each column, where applicable)

	Father / male guardian		Mother / female guardian	
V10.7	1 ☐	V10.8	1 ☐	No (formal) education
	2 ☐		2 ☐	Some primary schooling
	3 ☐		3 ☐	Standard 5 / Grade 7
	4 ☐		4 ☐	Some secondary schooling
	5 ☐		5 ☐	Matric / Grade 12
	6 ☐		6 ☐	Technical / FET college certificate
	7 ☐		7 ☐	Technikon certificate or diploma

- 8 ☐ University certificate or diploma
- 9 ☐ Technikon degree
- 10 ☐ University degree
- 11 ☐ I don't know

- 10 ☐ R 51 201 – R 102 400
- 11 ☐ R 102 401 – R 204 800
- 12 ☐ R 204 801 or more
- 13 ☐ I don't know

K.4 What is the employment situation of each of your parents / guardians (where applicable)? (Please mark one box for each parent / guardian only)

- | Father / male guardian | Mother / female guardian |
|----------------------------------|--|
| V10.9 1 ☐ | V10.10 1 ☐ Working for a company / organisation / government department |
| 2 ☐ | 2 ☐ Working for him / herself, on his / her own |
| 3 ☐ | 3 ☐ Working for him / herself and employing other people |
| 4 ☐ | 4 ☐ Assisting someone else in his / her small business |
| 5 ☐ | 5 ☐ Unemployed and seeking employment |
| 6 ☐ | 6 ☐ Unemployed and not seeking employment |
| 7 ☐ | 7 ☐ Working as a domestic worker / gardener |
| 8 ☐ | 8 ☐ Working in the informal sector (as a vendor / hawker) |
| 9 ☐ | 9 ☐ Working as a subsistence farmer |
| 10 ☐ | 10 ☐ Retired / on pension |
| 11 ☐ | 11 ☐ I don't know |

K.5 Approximately how much do your parents / guardians earn per month before deductions (where applicable)? (Please mark one box for each parent / guardian only)

- | Father / male guardian | Mother / female guardian |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| V10.11 1 ☐ | V10.12 1 ☐ No income |
| 2 ☐ | 2 ☐ R 1 – R 400 |
| 3 ☐ | 3 ☐ R 401 – R 800 |
| 4 ☐ | 4 ☐ R 801 – R 1 600 |
| 5 ☐ | 5 ☐ R 1 601 – R 3 200 |
| 6 ☐ | 6 ☐ R 3 201 – R 6 400 |
| 7 ☐ | 7 ☐ R 6 401 – R 12 800 |
| 8 ☐ | 8 ☐ R 12 801 – R 25 600 |
| 9 ☐ | 9 ☐ R 25 601 – R 51 200 |

K.6 Who of the following, where applicable, are studying at a university or technikon this year? (Please mark one box in every row)

- | | Yes | No |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| V10.13 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ | Father / male guardian |
| V10.14 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ | Mother / female guardian |
| V10.15 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ | Brother |
| V10.16 1 ☐ | 2 ☐ | Sister |

K.7 Are any of your brothers or sisters graduates of a higher education institution?

- V10.17 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

K.8 What kind of dwelling are you living in at present? (Please read the whole list before marking one box only)

- V10.18 1 ☐ House or brick structure on a separate stand or yard
- 2 ☐ Traditional dwelling / hut / structure made of traditional materials
- 3 ☐ Flat in block of flats
- 4 ☐ Town / cluster / semi-detached house (simplex, duplex, triplex)
- 5 ☐ House / flat / room in back yard
- 6 ☐ Informal dwelling / shack in back yard
- 7 ☐ Informal dwelling / shack NOT in back yard, e.g. in an informal / squatter settlement
- 8 ☐ Room / flatlet not in back yard but on a shared property
- 9 ☐ Caravan or tent
- 10 ☐ Private ship / boat
- 11 ☐ Other (please specify):

V10.19

K.9 What sources of information are there in your current place of residence? (You may mark more than one box)

- V10.20 ☐ None
- V10.21 ☐ Books and / or encyclopedias and / or journals
- V10.22 ☐ Newspapers
- V10.23 ☐ Magazines

- V10.24 ☐ Computer
- V10.25 ☐ Internet / e-mail access
- V10.26 ☐ Educational CDs
- V10.27 ☐ Educational DVDs / Videos
- V10.28 ☐ TV
- V10.29 ☐ DSTV
- V10.30 ☐ Other ((please specify):
- V10.31

K.10 Do you have a cell-phone? (Please mark one box only)

- V10.32 1 ☐ Yes
- 2 ☐ No

K.11 Are you on contract or pre-paid? (Please mark one box only)

- V10.33 1 ☐ Contract
- 2 ☐ Pre-paid

K.12 Which of the following modes of transport do you use on a daily basis? (You may mark more than one box)

- V10.34 ☐ Private car
- V10.35 ☐ Bus
- V10.36 ☐ Train
- V10.37 ☐ Bicycle
- V10.38 ☐ Taxi
- V10.39 ☐ Motorcycle
- V10.40 ☐ Other (please specify):
- V10.41

SECTION L: EXPERIENCE OF 2006

IF YOU ARE STUDYING AT A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS L.1 – L.3. IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION L.4

L.1 How well have you performed, on average, in your studies so far this year? (Please mark one box only)

- V11.1 1 ☐ Better than you expected
- 2 ☐ Worse than you expected → Please skip to Question L.3

L.2 To what extent have the following factors helped you to perform well in your studies this year? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all						To a very large extent				
	1	2	3	4	5						
V11.2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Quality of teaching					
V11.3	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Feeling secure on campus					
V11.4	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Knowing my studies are paid for					
V11.5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Studying with like-minded students					
V11.6	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Knowing I am studying at an institution with high academic standards					
V11.7	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Having a space where I can study in peace and quiet					
V11.8	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My Grade 12 marks					
V11.9	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The foundation for higher education studies that my schooling laid for me					
V11.10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My interest in the programme I am studying					
V11.11	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The influence of my lecturers					
V11.12	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The quality of student life					
V11.13	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Having a positive attitude towards life					
V11.14	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Being self-confident					
V11.15	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to prove myself to those who thought I would not succeed					
V11.16	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My social life					

→ PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION L.4.

L.3 To what extent have the following factors prevented you from performing well in your studies this year? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all						To a very large extent				
	1	2	3	4	5						
V11.17	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Poor quality of teaching					
V11.18	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Feeling insecure on campus					
V11.19	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Being worried about how to finance my studies					
V11.20	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Studying with students with whom I have very					

V11.21	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	little in common Knowing I am studying at an institution that does not have high academic standards
V11.22	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Not having a space where I can study in peace and quiet
V11.23	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My Grade 12 marks
V11.24	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The poor preparation for higher education studies that my schooling gave me
V11.25	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My lack of interest in the programme I am studying
V11.26	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The negative influence of my lecturers
V11.27	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The disappointing quality of student life
V11.28	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Having a negative attitude towards life
V11.29	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Having little self- confidence
V11.30	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Others not having expected me to succeed
V11.31	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My social life

L.4 How happy are you with your present life situation (working, not working, studying, not studying, or a combination of these)?

	Not at all happy			Very happy	
	1	2	3	4	5
V11.32	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

L.5 To what extent do you feel that you have been able to choose your present life situation?

	Not at all			To a very large extent	
	1	2	3	4	5
V11.33	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

L.6 What is the main reason for your response to Question L.5?

V11.34

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR
COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.**

PLEASE:

- 1. CHECK THAT YOU HAVE ANSWERED ALL THE SECTIONS AND QUESTIONS THAT APPLY TO YOU. PLEASE REFER TO THE SUMMARY IN THE RIGHT-HAND COLUMN ON PAGE 3.**
- 2. REMEMBER TO PLACE THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE PRE-PAID ENVELOPE AND TO MAIL IT BACK TO THE HSRC.**

6. Learner Destination Questionnaire 2008

Dear Learner / Student

Please answer the questionnaire as honestly and fully as you can. The answers you give will be treated confidentially, and will be used for research purposes only. No names will be used in the report on the study. Your responses will help us to identify those factors which affect learner choices, and will influence the ways in which schools guide learner choices and in which institutions of further learning admit students to study programmes.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely



Michael Cosser
Project Leader

Tel. 012 302-2924

HOW TO COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE

- The questionnaire may look long, BUT YOU DO NOT NEED TO ANSWER EVERY SECTION. Please follow the instructions very carefully. There are instructions, **in red**, before some questions and next to the answers for some of the questions. **THESE FILTERS ARE VERY IMPORTANT.** You need answer only those questions which apply to you; please do not answer sections or questions that do not apply.

ALL LEARNERS / STUDENTS SHOULD ANSWER SECTIONS A, H AND J. ANSWER SECTIONS B, C AND D (WHERE APPLICABLE) IF YOU ARE STUDYING (FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME), SECTION E IF YOU ARE NOT STUDYING, SECTION F IF YOU ARE WORKING (FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME), AND SECTION G IF YOU ARE NOT WORKING.

- Please mark only one box in a list of answers unless the instruction reads "You may mark more than one box". Mark a box by placing a cross in it – for example,

×

- Where there is a list of items, each one a scale, and you are asked to rate an item from, for example, "Not at all" to "To a very large extent", please rate every item in the list.

To rate a scale item: if you were asked to rate the extent to which your parents / guardians had influenced your choice of higher education institution, and you felt that their influence had been "large" but not "very large", you would mark as follows:

Not at all				To a very large extent
1	2	3	4	5
			×	

TO BE COMPLETED BY LEARNER:												
Surname												
First and second names												
Identity number												
Date of Birth												
	Y	Y	Y	Y	M	M	D	D				
Postal address												
P.O. Box												
Number & Street												
Suburb / Town												
Postal code												
Cell-phone no.												
Institution enrolled at in 2008 (where applicable)												

SECTION A: PRESENT SITUATION

A.1 Did you register to study at an institution / enrol in a school during 2008? (Please mark one box only)

- V1.1 1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ No → Please skip to Question A.3

A.2 Have you since deregistered / dropped out? (Please mark one box only)

- V1.2 1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ No

A.3 Which describes your present life situation best? (This is the activity on which you have spent most time in 2008) (Please mark one box only)

- V1.3 1 ☐ Studying
2 ☐ Working
3 ☐ Not working or studying, but looking for a job
4 ☐ Not working or studying, and not looking for a job

A.4 Which of the following qualifications have you achieved since leaving school? (You may mark more than one box)

- V1.4 1 ☐ University Certificate / Diploma
2 ☐ Baccalaureus Technologiae (B Tech)
3 ☐ National Diploma
4 ☐ National Higher Certificate
5 ☐ National Certificate
6 ☐ Other (please specify):
V1.5

SECTION B: STUDYING

IF YOU ARE ENROLLED IN AN EDUCATION INSTITUTION, FOR FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME STUDY, PLEASE ANSWER THIS SECTION. IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION E

B.1 Did you seek any career guidance when you enrolled at the institution where you are now studying? (Please mark one box only)

- V2.1 1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ No → Please skip to Question B.3

B.2 What form did this guidance take? (You may mark more than one box)

- V2.2 ☐ An aptitude test to see what I was best suited for
V2.3 ☐ Discussion with a career counsellor
V2.4 ☐ Discussion with a student adviser
V2.5 ☐ Completion of a personality type inventory to see what field of study and career were best suited to my personality type
V2.6 ☐ Discussion with a person from industry / a company, organised by the institution
V2.7 ☐ A visit to a company, organised by the institution
V2.8 ☐ Discussion with a lecturer / teacher at the institution
V2.9 ☐ Other (please specify):
V2.10

B.3 At which institution type are you enrolled? (Please mark one box only)

- V2.11 1 ☐ At a school → Please answer Section B.i
2 ☐ At an Adult Basic Education & Training (ABET) Centre → Please skip to Section B.ii
3 ☐ At a Further Education & Training (FET) College or at a private FET institution → Please skip to Section B.iii
4 ☐ At an agricultural education institution which is not a university → Please skip to Section F
5 ☐ At a nursing education institution which is not a university → Please skip to Section F
6 ☐ At a higher education institution⁴⁰ → Please skip to Section B.iv

SECTION B.i: AT SCHOOL

B.4 What was your main reason for choosing to enrol in a school? (Please mark one box only)

- V2.12 1 ☐ I wanted to repeat Grade 12 to improve my marks in specific subjects to be able to proceed to higher education
2 ☐ I failed Grade 12, and am repeating the year
→ Please skip to Question B.6

⁴⁰ A higher education institution may be a university, a university of technology, a technikon, a national institute for higher education, or a private higher education institution.

- 3 ☐ My parents / guardians wanted me to repeat Grade 12 at school → *Please skip to Question B.6*
- 4 ☐ I wanted to enrol in the school's post-Grade 12 Programme → *Please skip to Question B.6*
- 5 ☐ The school I attended in 2005 would not re-admit me so that I could repeat Grade 12 → *Please skip to Question B.6*
- 6 ☐ I can earn higher marks at the school in which I am now enrolled → *Please skip to Question B.6*
- 7 ☐ Other (*please specify, then skip to Question B.6*)

V2.13

B.5 Please indicate the levels of the subjects for which you are trying to improve your marks by placing H for higher grade or S for standard grade next to the appropriate subjects.

	Level	
V2.14	☐	English
V2.15	☐	Afrikaans
V2.16	☐	Mathematics
V2.17	☐	Biology
V2.18	☐	Business Economics
V2.19	☐	Physical Science
V2.20	☐	Geography
V2.21	☐	Economics
V2.22	☐	IsiZulu
V2.23	☐	History
V2.24	☐	Other (<i>please specify</i>):
V2.25	☐	Other:
V2.26	☐	Other:
V2.27	☐	Other:

B.6 Are you enrolled in a government / state school? (*Please mark one box only*)

- V2.28 1 ☐ Yes → *Please skip to Section F*
- 2 ☐ No

B.7 What is your main reason for having chosen to repeat all or part of Grade 12 in an independent school? (*Please mark one box only*)

- V2.29 1 ☐ The standard of education is higher than in a state school
- 2 ☐ Being at an independent school gives me greater flexibility to pursue other activities
- 3 ☐ I have a better chance of improving my symbols at an independent school

- 4 ☐ My previous school did not allow me to repeat Grade 12
- 5 ☐ My parents / guardians wanted me to repeat all or part of Grade 12 in an independent school
- 6 ☐ The lack of violence in the independent school in which I am enrolled allows me to concentrate on my studies

SECTION B.ii: AT AN ABET CENTRE

B.8 What was your main reason for choosing to enrol in an ABET centre? (*Please mark one box only*)

- V2.30 1 ☐ I wanted to repeat Grade 12 to improve my marks in specific subjects to be able to proceed to higher education → *Please answer Question B.9*
- 2 ☐ I can earn higher marks at the ABET Centre in which I am now enrolled → *Please answer Question B.9*
- 3 ☐ I failed Grade 12, and am repeating the year → *Please skip to Section F*
- 4 ☐ My parents / guardians wanted me to repeat Grade 12 at an ABET Centre → *Please skip to Section F*
- 5 ☐ The school I attended in 2005 would not re-admit me so that I could repeat Grade 12 → *Please skip to Section F*
- 6 ☐ Other (*please specify, then skip to Section F*)

V2.31

B.9 Please indicate the levels of the subjects for which you are trying to improve your marks by placing H for higher grade or S for standard grade next to the appropriate subjects.

	Level	
V2.32	☐	English
V2.33	☐	Afrikaans
V2.34	☐	Mathematics
V2.35	☐	Biology
V2.36	☐	Business Economics
V2.37	☐	Physical Science
V2.38	☐	Geography
V2.39	☐	Economics
V2.40	☐	IsiZulu
V2.41	☐	History
V2.42	☐	Other (<i>please specify</i>):

V2.43 _____ Other:
V2.44 _____ Other:
V2.45 _____ Other:

PLEASE GO TO SECTION F

**SECTION B.iii: AT AN FET
COLLEGE OR PRIVATE FET
INSTITUTION**

B.10 What was your main reason for choosing to study at an FET institution? (Please mark one box only)

- V2.46 1 ☐ I wanted to improve my marks so that I could proceed to higher education
2 ☐ I was interested in studying in a field not offered by any other type of institution
3 ☐ It was too expensive for me to study at another type of institution
4 ☐ My parents / guardians / relatives studied at an FET institution
5 ☐ My parents / guardians / relatives persuaded me to study at an FET institution
6 ☐ I wanted to study in a field that would lead to my finding a job
7 ☐ I knew that I could achieve a qualification more quickly in the institution at which I am studying
8 ☐ The school I attended in 2005 would not re-admit me so that I could repeat Grade 12
9 ☐ It was easier to gain admission to an FET institution
10 ☐ Other (please specify):

V2.47

B.11 In which year of study are you currently enrolled? (Please mark one box only)

- V2.48 1 ☐ First year
2 ☐ Second year
3 ☐ Third year

B.12 Are you studying at an FET College? (Please mark one box only)

- V2.49 1 ☐ Yes
2 ☐ No → Please skip to Question B.14

B.13 What is your main field of study at your FET College? (Please mark one box only)

Business Studies

- V2.50 1 ☐ Secretarial
2 ☐ Administration (Public & Business)
3 ☐ Personnel (including Human Resources & Public Relations)
4 ☐ Financial Management
5 ☐ Marketing

Engineering Studies

- 6 ☐ Electrical (Heavy & Light Current)
7 ☐ Mechanical
8 ☐ Construction

Art & Music

- 9 ☐ Art & Design
10 ☐ Music & Dance

General Education

- 11 ☐ Grade 10 & 11 Programmes
12 ☐ Grade 12 (National Senior Certificate / NSC)

Utility Studies

- 13 ☐ Cosmetics
14 ☐ Haircare
15 ☐ Interior Decorating
16 ☐ Clothing Production & Textiles
17 ☐ Hospitality & Associated Industries
18 ☐ Tourism

Educare & Social Services

- 19 ☐ Educare
20 ☐ Other

- V2.51 Other (please specify):
Other (please specify):
Other (please specify):
Other (please specify):

PLEASE GO TO SECTION C

B.14 What is your main field of study at a private FET institution? (Please mark one box only)

Agriculture & nature conservation

- V2.52 1 ☐ Primary agriculture
2 ☐ Secondary agriculture
3 ☐ Nature conservation
4 ☐ Forestry & wood technology
5 ☐ Horticulture

Culture & arts

- 6 ☐ Cultural studies
7 ☐ Design
8 ☐ Sport

- 9 ☐ Performing arts
 10 ☐ Film, television & video
 11 ☐ Music
 12 ☐ Visual arts

Business, commerce & management studies

- 13 ☐ Marketing
 14 ☐ Office administration
 15 ☐ Public relations
 16 ☐ Project management
 17 ☐ Human resources
 18 ☐ Finance and economics
 19 ☐ Purchasing
 20 ☐ Generic management
 21 ☐ Public administration

Communication studies & language

- 22 ☐ Communication studies
 23 ☐ Information studies
 24 ☐ Language
 25 ☐ Literature

Education, training & development

- 26 ☐ Adult learning
 27 ☐ Early childhood development
 28 ☐ Higher education & training
 29 ☐ Occupationally-directed education, training & development practice

- 30 ☐ Schooling

Manufacturing, engineering & technology

- 31 ☐ Engineering & related design
 32 ☐ Manufacturing & assembly
 33 ☐ Fabrication & extraction

Human & social studies

- 34 ☐ Environmental relations
 35 ☐ General social science
 36 ☐ Industrial & organisational governance & human resource development
 37 ☐ People / human-centred development
 38 ☐ Public policy, politics & democratic citizenship
 39 ☐ Religious & ethical foundations of society
 40 ☐ Rural & agrarian studies
 41 ☐ Traditions, histories & legacies
 42 ☐ Urban & regional studies

Law, military science & security

- 43 ☐ Safety in society
 44 ☐ Sovereignty of the state
 45 ☐ Justice in society

Health sciences & social services

- 46 ☐ Preventive health
 47 ☐ Promotive health & developmental services

- 48 ☐ Curative health
 49 ☐ Rehabilitative health

Physical, mathematical, computer & life sciences

- 50 ☐ Physical sciences
 51 ☐ Mathematical sciences
 52 ☐ Information technology & computer sciences
 53 ☐ Life sciences
 54 ☐ Earth & space sciences
 55 ☐ Environmental sciences

Services

- 56 ☐ Cleaning, domestic, hiring, property & rescue services
 57 ☐ Hospitality, tourism, travel, leisure & gaming
 58 ☐ Transport & logistics operations
 59 ☐ Personal care
 60 ☐ Wholesale & retail
 61 ☐ Consumer sciences

Physical planning & construction

- 62 ☐ Physical planning, design & management
 63 ☐ Building construction
 64 ☐ Civil engineering construction
 65 ☐ Electrical infrastructure construction

PLEASE GO TO SECTION C

SECTION B.iv: AT A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

B.15 At which institution are you enrolled? (Please mark one box only)

Public higher education institutions

Eastern Cape

- V2.53 1 ☐ Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University
 2 ☐ Rhodes University
 3 ☐ University of Fort Hare
 4 ☐ Walter Sisulu University of Technology

Free State

- 5 ☐ Central University of Technology
 6 ☐ University of the Free State

Gauteng

- 7 ☐ Tshwane University of Technology
 8 ☐ University of Johannesburg
 9 ☐ University of Pretoria
 10 ☐ University of the Witwatersrand
 11 ☐ Vaal University of Technology

KwaZulu-Natal

- 12 ☐ Durban University of Technology

- 13 ☐ Mangosuthu Technikon
- 14 ☐ University of KwaZulu-Natal
- 15 ☐ University of Zululand
Limpopo
- 16 ☐ University of Limpopo
- 17 ☐ University of Venda
Mpumalanga
- 18 ☐ Mpumalanga Institute for Higher Education
Northern Cape
- 19 ☐ Northern Cape Institute for Higher Education
North West
- 20 ☐ North-West University
Western Cape
- 21 ☐ Cape Peninsula University of Technology
- 22 ☐ University of Stellenbosch
- 23 ☐ University of the Western Cape
- 24 ☐ University of Cape Town

Public distance education institutions

- 25 ☐ University of South Africa (UNISA)

Private higher education institutions

- 26 ☐ Monash SA
- 27 ☐ Damelin
- 28 ☐ Boston City Campus
- 29 ☐ Varsity College
- 30 ☐ Lyceum
- 31 ☐ College Campus
- 32 ☐ Midrand Graduate Institute
- 33 ☐ Other private institution (please specify name):

V2.54

- 34 ☐ Overseas / foreign institution (please specify name):

V2.55

B.16 Was this your first choice of institution for higher education study? (Please mark one box only)

- V2.56 1 ☐ Yes → Please skip to Question B.18
- 2 ☐ No

B.17 Why did you not study at the institution that was your first choice? (You may mark more than one box)

- V2.57 ☐ My marks were not good enough to get me into that institution
- V2.58 ☐ There were no places in the programme I wanted to study

- V2.59 ☐ I changed my mind about studying at that institution because I wanted to live at home while studying
- V2.60 ☐ I changed my mind about studying at that institution because I wanted to live in residence / away from home while studying
- V2.61 ☐ I received a bursary to study at my present institution
- V2.62 ☐ The fees are lower at my present institution
- V2.63 ☐ There are better student clubs / cultural activities here
- V2.64 ☐ My present institution allows me to study in distance mode
- V2.65 ☐ Other (please specify):
- V2.66

B.18 To what extent did the following influence your decision to enrol at the institution at which you are studying? (Please mark one box in every row)

- | | Not at all | | | | | | To a very large extent | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | | | | |
| V2.67 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | It has a good reputation | | | | | |
| V2.68 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The school / faculty / department in which I am studying has a good reputation | | | | | |
| V2.69 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | It has higher academic standards than do other institutions | | | | | |
| V2.70 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | It is the only institution that offers the programme I wanted to study | | | | | |
| V2.71 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | My parents / guardians / brothers / sisters / other relatives studied at this institution | | | | | |
| V2.72 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | My friends recommended it to me | | | | | |
| V2.73 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | A teacher at school recommended it to me | | | | | |
| V2.74 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | It is near my home, where I wanted to live while studying | | | | | |
| V2.75 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | It is near the home of my relatives, with whom I wanted to live while studying | | | | | |
| V2.76 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | It is far away from home, and I wanted to live in residence / other accommodation while studying | | | | | |
| V2.77 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The fees are lower than at other institutions | | | | | |
| V2.78 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | There are better student clubs / cultural activities here than at other institutions | | | | | |

- V2.79 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ There are better sporting facilities here than at other institutions
- V2.80 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ It allows me to study in distance (non-lecture-based) mode
- V2.81 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ I was awarded a scholarship to study here

B.19 How did you gain admission to the institution at which you are enrolled? (You may mark more than one box)

- V2.82 ☐ On the strength of my school-leaving results
- V2.83 ☐ Through the points system of the institution
- V2.84 ☐ As a mature-age student
- V2.85 ☐ Through being accepted into a bridging / foundation programme that allows one to register for first-year courses in the next year
- V2.86 ☐ I received a sports bursary
- V2.87 ☐ Through my performance on special admissions tests / examinations
- V2.88 ☐ Through my performance on an aptitude test
- V2.89 ☐ Through Senate Discretion
- V2.90 ☐ Through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- V2.91 ☐ Other (please specify):
- V2.92 ☐

B.20 What type of qualification are you studying towards? (Please mark one box only)

- V2.93 ☐ 1 University Professional 1st Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ 2 University General 1st Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ 3 University Certificate / Diploma
- ☐ 4 Baccalaureus Technologiae (B Tech)
- ☐ 5 National Diploma
- ☐ 6 National Higher Certificate
- ☐ 7 National Certificate
- ☐ 8 Other (please specify):
- V2.94 ☐

B.21 In which year of study are you currently enrolled? (Please mark one box only)

- V2.95 ☐ 1 First year
- ☐ 2 Second year
- ☐ 3 Third year

B.22 In which programme(s) are you enrolled? (You may mark more than one box)

☐ Natural & mathematical sciences

- V2.96 ☐ Computer science
- V2.97 ☐ Life & physical science
- V2.98 ☐ Mathematical sciences
- Engineering & other applied sciences**
- V2.99 ☐ Agriculture
- V2.100 ☐ Architecture & planning
- V2.101 ☐ Engineering
- V2.102 ☐ Industrial arts
- Health sciences**
- V2.103 ☐ Health sciences
- Business / commerce**
- V2.104 ☐ Business / commerce
- Education**
- V2.105 ☐ Education
- Social sciences & applied humanities**
- V2.106 ☐ Home economics
- V2.107 ☐ Law
- V2.108 ☐ Librarianship
- V2.109 ☐ Physical education
- V2.110 ☐ Psychology
- V2.111 ☐ Public administration / social services
- V2.112 ☐ Social sciences
- Humanities**
- V2.113 ☐ Visual & performing arts
- V2.114 ☐ Communication
- V2.115 ☐ Languages, literature
- V2.116 ☐ Philosophy, theology

B.23 To what extent did the following influence your decision to enrol in the field in which you are studying? (Please mark one box in every row)

- | | Not at all | | To a very large extent | | | |
|--------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| V2.117 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Interest in this field of study |
| V2.118 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Wanting to enter a profession for which a qualification in this field is needed |
| V2.119 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Good performance in this field at school |
| V2.120 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The reputation of the school / faculty / department in which I am studying |
| V2.121 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Opportunities of finding a job in South Africa after qualifying in this field |
| V2.122 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Opportunities of finding a job overseas after qualifying in this field |
| V2.123 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Ability to use a qualification in this field |

V2.124	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	to contribute towards the development of the country and its people
V2.125	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The offer of a scholarship to study in this field
V2.126	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The ability to obtain a bank loan to study in this field
V2.127	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The ability to obtain funding through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme to study in this field
V2.128	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The amount of money to be made with a qualification in this field
V2.129	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A parent / relative having studied in this field
V2.130	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Parents / guardians / relatives having persuaded me to study in this field
V2.131	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Friends having persuaded me to study in this field
V2.132	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A boyfriend / girlfriend having decided to study in this field
V2.133	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A teacher at school having persuaded me to study in this field
V2.134	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Not being able to study in the field that was my first choice
V2.135	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Ability to follow a practical course of study
V2.136	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Ability to follow a theoretical course of study
						My role-model in life having studied in this field

IF YOU ARE NOT STUDYING IN THE FIELD IN WHICH YOU INTENDED TO STUDY WHEN YOU COMPLETED THE GRADE 12 LEARNER ASPIRATION QUESTIONNAIRE IN 2005, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTION B.24. IF YOUR STUDY CHOICE HAS NOT CHANGED, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION B.25

B.24 Why are you not studying in the field in which you intended to study? (You may mark more than one box)

V2.137	☐	It does not offer me job opportunities in South Africa
V2.138	☐	It does not offer me job opportunities overseas
V2.139	☐	It does not allow me to contribute towards the development of South Africa and its people
V2.140	☐	My parents / guardians persuaded me not to

V2.141	☐	I am no longer interested in the field in which I intended to study
V2.142	☐	I could not get a scholarship to study in that field
V2.143	☐	I could not get a bank loan to study in that field
V2.144	☐	I could not get funding through the National Student Financial Aid Scheme to study in that Field
V2.145	☐	I can earn more money in the field in which I am now studying
V2.146	☐	My marks were not good enough to get me into the field in which I wanted to study
V2.147	☐	My friends persuaded me not to study in that field
V2.148	☐	A teacher persuaded me not to study in that field
V2.149	☐	My boyfriend / girlfriend persuaded me not to study in that field
V2.150	☐	Other (please specify):
V2.151		

B.25 Are you studying at a private higher education institution? (Please mark one box only)

V2.152	1	☐	Yes
	2	☐	No → Please skip to Question B.27

B.26 To what extent have the following influenced your decision to study at a private institution? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all						To a very large extent				
	1	2	3	4	5						
V2.153	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It has a better reputation than any public institution					
V2.154	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It has a better reputation in my field of study than any public institution					
V2.155	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It will better prepare me for the job market than will a public institution					
V2.156	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It will better prepare me for further study overseas than will a public institution					
V2.157	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It offers better personal security than a public institution does					
V2.158	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The fees are more affordable than at a public institution					
V2.159	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	It has more flexible admission requirements than do public institutions					

B.27 In which mode of learning are you studying?
(Please mark one box only)

- V2.160
- 1 ☐ Contact mode (face-to-face, lecture-based learning) → Please skip to Section C
- 2 ☐ Distance mode (non-lecture-based learning)
- 3 ☐ Mixed mode (a combination of lecture-based and non-lecture-based learning) → Please skip to Question B.29

B.28 What was your main reason for choosing to study in distance mode? (Please mark one box only)

- V2.161
- 1 ☐ There is no contact-mode institution near my home
- 2 ☐ I was not accepted by a contact-mode institution near my home
- 3 ☐ I could not afford to study in contact mode
- 4 ☐ I am working, and studying part-time
- 5 ☐ I have family responsibilities, and cannot attend lectures
- 6 ☐ It was easier to be admitted to an institution through which I could study in distance mode
- 7 ☐ I am able to study a specific programme or course in distance mode that is not available on a contact-mode basis

→ PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION C

B.29 What was your main reason for choosing to study in mixed mode? (Please mark one box only)

- V2.162
- 1 ☐ There is no contact-mode institution near my home
- 2 ☐ I was not accepted by a contact-mode institution near my home
- 3 ☐ I could not afford to study in purely contact mode
- 4 ☐ I work during the day / night, but am able to attend some lectures
- 5 ☐ I am working, and studying part-time
- 6 ☐ I have family responsibilities, and cannot attend lectures
- 7 ☐ The programme I am studying is flexible enough to allow students to study in mixed mode
- 8 ☐ It was easier to be admitted to an institution through which I could study in mixed mode

- 9 ☐ I am able to study a specific programme or course in mixed mode that is not available on a purely contact-mode basis
- 10 ☐ I like the combination of studying in distance mode and having some contact tuition
- 11 ☐ Other (please specify):

V2.163

SECTION C: PROFESSIONAL ASPIRATION

C.1 Which profession are you planning to enter once you have completed your studies?
(Please mark one box only)

- V3.1
- 1 ☐ Engineering
- 2 ☐ Architectural
- 3 ☐ Medical
- 4 ☐ Dental
- 5 ☐ Veterinary
- 6 ☐ Nursing
- 7 ☐ Academic
- 8 ☐ Teaching
- 9 ☐ Accounting
- 10 ☐ Legal
- 11 ☐ Social work
- 12 ☐ Clerical
- 13 ☐ Military
- 14 ☐ Other (please specify):
- V3.2
- 15 ☐ I don't know

C.2 To what extent have the following influenced your choice of profession? (Please mark one box in every row)

- | | Not at all | | | | | | To a very large extent | | | | |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | | | | |
| V3.3 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | A passion for the profession | | | | | |
| V3.4 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Wanting to enter the profession since you were young | | | | | |
| V3.5 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Wanting to enter the profession because of the influence of a teacher in your school | | | | | |
| V3.6 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Wanting to make a difference to the lives of all South Africans through working in the profession | | | | | |
| V3.7 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Your choice of subjects for the Senior | | | | | |

					Certificate having naturally led you into this profession
V3.8	☐	☐	☐	☐	Family members / relatives having entered this profession
V3.9	☐	☐	☐	☐	This profession being the only career option open to you in the circumstances in which you find yourself
V3.10	☐	☐	☐	☐	The flexible lifestyle which working in this profession will allow you
V3.11	☐	☐	☐	☐	The status that the profession has in the community
V3.12	☐	☐	☐	☐	The certainty of finding a job in this profession
V3.13	☐	☐	☐	☐	The amount of money to be made in this profession
V3.14	☐	☐	☐	☐	Not knowing what else to do with your life

→ IF YOU INDICATED IN QUESTION C.1 THAT YOU PLAN TO ENTER THE TEACHING PROFESSION, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTION C.3. IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION C.4

C.3 To what extent have the following factors influenced your decision to enter the teaching profession? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all				To a very large extent	
	1	2	3	4	5	
V3.15	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	A passion for teaching
V3.16	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to be a teacher since you were young
V3.17	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Wanting to become a teacher because of the influence of a teacher in your school
V3.18	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Your choice of subjects for the Senior Certificate having naturally led you into teaching
V3.19	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Family members / relatives having been teachers
V3.20	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Teaching being the only career open to you in the circumstances in which you find yourself
V3.21	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The flexible lifestyle which teaching provides
V3.22	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The usefulness of teaching as an entry point into other careers
V3.23	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The status that teachers have in the community

V3.24	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Not knowing what else to do with your life
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→ PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION F

C.4 To what extent have the following influenced your decision NOT to enter the teaching profession? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all				To a very large extent	
	1	2	3	4	5	
V3.25	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The low status that teachers enjoy in the community
V3.26	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Knowing I can earn more money in my chosen profession
V3.27	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The attitude of the teachers in my school to their profession
V3.28	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The difficulties that teachers in my school had in controlling learners
V3.29	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The culture of violence in my school
V3.30	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Family members / relatives having been teachers
V3.31	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Knowing I can do something better with my life than become a teacher

SECTION D: ENROLMENT IN A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME

→ IF YOU ARE ENROLLED IN A PROGRAMME IN THE EDUCATION FIELD OR PLAN TO ENROL IN SUCH A PROGRAMME IN 2009, PLEASE COMPLETE THIS SECTION. IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION F

D.1 Will you be enrolling in an education programme for the first time in 2009? (Please mark one box only)

V4.1	1	☐	Yes
	2	☐	No

D.2 Which of the following persons / bodies has persuaded you to study in the education field?
(You may mark more than one box)

- V4.2 ☐ Teacher / career guidance expert in your school
- V4.3 ☐ Career guidance expert from outside your school
- V4.4 ☐ Teachers' union (e.g., South African Democratic Teachers' Union – SADTU)
- V4.5 ☐ Other teaching body (please specify):
- V4.6

D.3 To what extent have the following factors influenced your decision to study education?
(Please mark one box in every row)

- | | Not at all | | | | | | To a very large extent | | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | | | | |
| V4.7 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The flexibility that studying education gives you to enter another programme area | | | | | |
| V4.8 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The range of career opportunities that a qualification in education opens up | | | | | |
| V4.9 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The amount of money to be made in South Africa with an education qualification | | | | | |
| V4.10 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The amount of money to be made overseas with an education qualification | | | | | |
| V4.11 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The ease with which you can be accepted into teacher education programmes rather than into other programme areas | | | | | |
| V4.12 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Being assured of getting a job if you study education | | | | | |

D.4 For what level of teaching do you plan to achieve your education qualification? (Please mark one box only)

- V4.13
- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| 1 | ☐ | Early childhood development (pre-school) |
| 2 | ☐ | Primary school teaching |
| 3 | ☐ | High / secondary school teaching |
| 4 | ☐ | Special education (e.g., remedial teaching) |
| 5 | ☐ | Adult education |
| 6 | ☐ | Other (please specify): |
- V4.14

ANSWER QUESTION D.5. IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION F

D.5 What subject do you plan to teach after achieving your education qualification?
(Please read the whole list before marking one box only)

- V4.15
- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | ☐ | Arts and culture |
| 2 | ☐ | Economic and management sciences |
| 3 | ☐ | Languages |
| 4 | ☐ | Life orientation |
| 5 | ☐ | Mathematics and mathematical literacy |
| 6 | ☐ | Natural sciences |
| 7 | ☐ | Human and social sciences |
| 8 | ☐ | Technology |
- General education and training*
- Further education and training*
- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 9 | ☐ | Agricultural science |
| 10 | ☐ | Dance |
| 11 | ☐ | Design and graphic art |
| 12 | ☐ | Music |
| 13 | ☐ | Speech and drama |
| 14 | ☐ | Visual arts |
| 15 | ☐ | Accounting |
| 16 | ☐ | Business economics |
| 17 | ☐ | Economics |
| 18 | ☐ | Languages |
| 19 | ☐ | Electrician work |
| 20 | ☐ | Motor mechanics |
| 21 | ☐ | Technical drawing |
| 22 | ☐ | Geography |
| 23 | ☐ | History |
| 24 | ☐ | Life orientation |
| 25 | ☐ | Mathematical literacy |
| 26 | ☐ | Mathematics |
| 27 | ☐ | Biology |
| 28 | ☐ | Physical science |
| 29 | ☐ | Computyping |
| 30 | ☐ | Computer studies |
| 31 | ☐ | Home economics |
| 32 | ☐ | Hotel keeping and catering |
| 33 | ☐ | Travel and tourism |
| 34 | ☐ | Other (please specify) |

V4.16

→ IF YOU PLAN TO ENTER THE TEACHING PROFESSION, PLEASE

→ PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION F

SECTION E: NOT STUDYING

IF YOU ARE NOT STUDYING AT PRESENT, PLEASE ANSWER THIS SECTION. OTHERWISE, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION F

E.1 What is your main reason for not studying at present? *(Please mark one box only)*

- V5.1
- 1 ☐ I do not need to study further because I have a job
 - 2 ☐ I wanted to get a job so I could become independent
 - 3 ☐ I wanted to get a job so I could save towards future studies
 - 4 ☐ My marks were not good enough to allow me to study further
 - 5 ☐ I failed Grade 12
 - 6 ☐ My parents / guardians wanted me to get a job so that I could support myself
 - 7 ☐ My parents / guardians wanted me to get a job so that I could support the family
 - 8 ☐ I do not have the money to study further
 - 9 ☐ I do not have a job, but believe I can easily find one without studying further
 - 10 ☐ I can earn more money without having to study further
 - 11 ☐ I am married, and my husband / wife supports me
 - 12 ☐ I am pregnant
 - 13 ☐ I have an illness which prevents me from studying further
 - 14 ☐ I am tired of studying
 - 15 ☐ Other *(please specify):*

V5.2

SECTION F: WORKING

IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED (EITHER FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME), PLEASE ANSWER THIS SECTION. IF YOU ARE NOT EMPLOYED, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION G

F.1 How did you find a job? *(Please mark one box only)*

- V6.1
- 1 ☐ Through a private employment agency
 - 2 ☐ Through Department of Labour employment services
 - 3 ☐ Through a labour broker
 - 4 ☐ Through relatives
 - 5 ☐ I joined the family business
 - 6 ☐ Through personal contacts
 - 7 ☐ Through a newspaper advertisement
 - 8 ☐ Through placing my own advertisement in a newspaper
 - 9 ☐ Through making telephonic, fax, or mail enquiries at workplaces, factories, and shops
 - 10 ☐ By going from place to place to ask for work
 - 11 ☐ Through my employer coming to my school / college / university to talk to students about jobs in that company
 - 12 ☐ Through my employer coming to my school / college / university to find employees
 - 13 ☐ With the help of my school / college / university
 - 14 ☐ Through school / college / university teaching staff
 - 15 ☐ Through contact with my employer through holiday jobs during my studies
 - 16 ☐ My school / college / university gave me a reference
 - 17 ☐ Other *(please specify):*

V6.2

F.2 How many months did it take you to find a job?

V6.3 months

F.3 How important were the following in helping you to find a job? *(Please mark one box in every row)*

- | | Not at all important | | Very important | | | |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| V6.4 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Having Grade 12 / a further qualification |
| V6.5 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The subjects you took for your Grade 12 / further qualification |
| V6.6 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The marks / symbols you achieved in Grade 12 / further qualification |
| V6.7 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | The assistance which your school / college / university gave you towards your job interview |
| V6.8 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | Formal career guidance |

V6.9	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	from your school / college / university Informal career guidance from a teacher at your school / college / university
V6.10	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	References from people who know you well
V6.11	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The confidence which having a Grade 12 / further qualification gave you for the job interview
V6.12	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Your ability to speak English well
V6.13	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The reputation of your school / college / university
V6.14	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Having gained some work experience through holiday / casual jobs
V6.15	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Offering to work for no pay
V6.16	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Your gender
V6.17	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Your population group
V6.18	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Being computer literate
V6.19	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Having a personal contact at the workplace of your employer
V6.20	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Having a valid driver's license
V6.21	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Personal faith
V6.22	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Your personality

F.4 Which describes your employment situation best? (Please mark one box only)

V6.23	1	☐	I am employed by a company / organization
	2	☐	I work for myself, on my own → Please skip to Question F.6
	3	☐	I work for myself, and employ other people → Please skip to Question F.6
	4	☐	→ Please skip to Question F.6
	5	☐	I work in a partnership with one or more persons → Please skip to Question F.6

F.5 What kind of employer do you work for? (Please mark one box only)

V6.24	1	☐	Government / a public sector company / a governmental organization
	2	☐	A non-governmental organization / community-based organization

3 ☐ A private company

F.6 How many hours do you usually work per week?

V6.25 hours

F.7 Do you work full-time or part-time? (Please mark one box only)

V6.26	1	☐	Full-time
	2	☐	Part-time

F.8 What kind of employment are you in? (Please mark one box only)

V6.27	1	☐	Permanent employment
	2	☐	Temporary contract employment
	3	☐	I am a casual worker

F.9 What are the main goods produced / services delivered at your place of work?

V6.28
.....
.....

F.10 What is your occupation?

V6.29
.....
.....

F.11 How much do you earn per month before deductions? (Please mark one box only)

V6.30	1	☐	No income
	2	☐	R 1 – R 400
	3	☐	R 401 – R 800
	4	☐	R 801 – R 1 600
	5	☐	R 1 601 – R 3 200
	6	☐	R 3 201 – R 6 400
	7	☐	R 6 401 – R 12 800
	8	☐	R 12 801 – R 25 600
	9	☐	R 25 601 – R 51 200
	10	☐	R 51 201 – R 102 400
	11	☐	R 102 401 – R 204 800
	12	☐	R 204 801 or more

F.12 Why are you working for yourself (either on your own or employing others)? *(You may mark more than one box)*

F.18 How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your work situation? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Very dissatisfied					Very satisfied		
	1	2	3	4	5			
V6.68	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Promotion opportunities		
V6.69	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Equal treatment of all population groups		
V6.70	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Equal treatment across the sexes		
V6.71	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Equal treatment of disabled persons		
V6.72	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Benefits (e.g., medical aid, pension, housing allowance, etc.)		

F.19 Overall, how satisfied are you with your work situation?

	Very dissatisfied					Very satisfied	
	1	2	3	4	5		
V6.73	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		

SECTION G: NOT WORKING

IF YOU ARE NOT EMPLOYED (WHETHER YOU ARE STUDYING OR NOT), PLEASE ANSWER THIS SECTION. OTHERWISE, PLEASE SKIP TO SECTION H

G.1 Which of the following statements most accurately describes your present situation? (Please mark one box only)

V7.1	1	☐	I am looking for a job
	2	☐	I have given up looking for a job
	3	☐	I do not need to work → Please skip to Question G.7
	4	☐	I am studying → Please skip to Question G.7

G.2 For how many months have you been looking / did you look for a job?

V7.2 months

G.3 What have you done / did you do to look for work? (You may mark more than one box)

V7.3 ☐ Mailed / faxed / e-mailed my CV to companies / organizations

V7.4 ☐ Answered newspaper advertisements for jobs

V7.5 ☐ Placed newspaper advertisements looking for a job

V7.6 ☐ Made enquiries at workplaces / farms / factories / shops

V7.7 ☐ Registered with a private employment agency

V7.8 ☐ Approached the Department of Labour employment office

V7.9 ☐ Gone from door to door looking for work

V7.10 ☐ Waited at the side of the road

V7.11 ☐ Asked friends / relatives for assistance

V7.12 ☐ Nothing

V7.13 ☐ Other (please specify):

V7.14

G.4 What do you think are the main reasons for your not having a job? (You may mark more than one box)

V7.15 ☐ There are no job opportunities (businesses, etc.) where I live

V7.16 ☐ No employer wants me, because I don't have the skills / experience for the job

V7.17 ☐ No employer wants people from my education institution

V7.18 ☐ My level of education is not high enough

V7.19 ☐ No employer wants people with skills in my subject areas

V7.20 ☐ I don't know

V7.21 ☐ I do not have any information on how or where to find work

V7.22 ☐ I do not have money for transport to go and look for work

V7.23 ☐ I do not have money to phone or fax in response to job advertisements

V7.24 ☐ I do not have the confidence to approach employers to ask for work

V7.25 ☐ Other (please specify):

V7.26

G.5 To what extent have the following contributed to your unemployment? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Not at all					To a very large extent	
	1	2	3	4	5		
V7.27	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My population group	
V7.28	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My gender	

V7.29 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ My physical ability

G.6 Which of the following would help you get a job? (You may mark more than one box)

- V7.30 ☐ Move to another area where there may be work
- V7.31 ☐ Get (more) practical training
- V7.32 ☐ Enrol for a post-Grade 12 qualification
- V7.33 ☐ Send my CV to employers / organizations
- V7.34 ☐ Make an appointment with employers / organizations to ask them for a job
- V7.35 ☐ Send my CV to an employment agency
- V7.36 ☐ Advertise in the newspaper that I am looking for a job
- V7.37 ☐ Get someone to help me write a good CV
- V7.38 ☐ Apply for more jobs than I have so far
- V7.39 ☐ Other (please specify):
- V7.40

G.7 How do you support yourself? (You may mark more than one box)

- V7.41 ☐ I am supported by a person / persons in the household in which I am currently living
- V7.42 ☐ I am supported by a person / persons (relative, boyfriend / girlfriend, family friend, etc.) not in the household in which I am currently living
- V7.43 ☐ I do odd jobs
- V7.44 ☐ I have a study bursary / loan / scholarship
- V7.45 ☐ Other (please specify):
- V7.46

SECTION H: PERSONAL INFORMATION

H.1 In which province is your family home? (Please specify the postal code first)

V8.1 **Postal code of the area in which your family lives** _ _ _ _

- V8.2 1 ☐ Eastern Cape
- 2 ☐ Free State
- 3 ☐ Gauteng
- 4 ☐ KwaZulu-Natal
- 5 ☐ Limpopo
- 6 ☐ Mpumalanga
- 7 ☐ Northern Cape
- 8 ☐ North West

- 9 ☐ Western Cape
- 10 ☐ Other (please specify):

V8.3

H.2 In which province are you living at present? (Please specify the postal code first)

V8.4 **Postal code of the area in which you are living** _ _ _ _

- V8.5 1 ☐ Eastern Cape
- 2 ☐ Free State
- 3 ☐ Gauteng
- 4 ☐ KwaZulu-Natal
- 5 ☐ Limpopo
- 6 ☐ Mpumalanga
- 7 ☐ Northern Cape
- 8 ☐ North West
- 9 ☐ Western Cape
- 10 ☐ Other (please specify):

V8.6

H.3 What is the highest level of education of each of your parents / guardians (where applicable)? (Please mark one box in each column, where applicable)

- | | Father / male guardian | | Mother / female guardian | |
|------|-----------------------------|------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| V8.7 | 1 ☐ | V8.8 | 1 ☐ | No (formal) education |
| | 2 ☐ | | 2 ☐ | Some primary schooling |
| | 3 ☐ | | 3 ☐ | Standard 5 / Grade 7 |
| | 4 ☐ | | 4 ☐ | Some secondary schooling |
| | 5 ☐ | | 5 ☐ | Matric / Grade 12 |
| | 6 ☐ | | 6 ☐ | Technical / FET college certificate |
| | 7 ☐ | | 7 ☐ | Technikon certificate or diploma |
| | 8 ☐ | | 8 ☐ | University certificate or diploma |
| | 9 ☐ | | 9 ☐ | Technikon degree |
| | 10 ☐ | | 10 ☐ | University degree |
| | 11 ☐ | | 11 ☐ | I don't know |

H.4 What is the employment situation of each of your parents / guardians (where applicable)?
(Please mark one box for each parent / guardian only)

	Father / male guardian		Mother / female guardian	
V8.9	1 ☐	V8.10	1 ☐	Working for a company / organisation / government department
	2 ☐		2 ☐	Working for him / herself, on his / her own
	3 ☐		3 ☐	Working for him / herself and employing other people
	4 ☐		4 ☐	Assisting someone else in his / her small business
	5 ☐		5 ☐	Unemployed and seeking employment
	6 ☐		6 ☐	Unemployed and not seeking employment
	7 ☐		7 ☐	Working as a domestic worker / gardener
	8 ☐		8 ☐	Working in the informal sector (as a vendor / hawker)
	9 ☐		9 ☐	Working as a subsistence farmer
	10 ☐		10 ☐	Retired / on pension
	11 ☐		11 ☐	I don't know

H.5 Approximately how much do your parents / guardians earn per month before deductions (where applicable)? (Please mark one box for each parent / guardian only)

	Father / male guardian		Mother / female guardian	
V8.11	1 ☐	V8.12	1 ☐	No income
	2 ☐		2 ☐	R 1 – R 400
	3 ☐		3 ☐	R 401 – R 800
	4 ☐		4 ☐	R 801 – R 1 600
	5 ☐		5 ☐	R 1 601 – R 3 200
	6 ☐		6 ☐	R 3 201 – R 6 400
	7 ☐		7 ☐	R 6 401 – R 12 800
	8 ☐		8 ☐	R 12 801 – R 25 600
	9 ☐		9 ☐	R 25 601 – R 51 200
	10 ☐		10 ☐	R 51 201 – R 102 400
	11 ☐		11 ☐	R 102 401 – R 204 800
	12 ☐		12 ☐	R 204 801 or more
	13 ☐		13 ☐	I don't know

H.6 Who of the following, where applicable, are

studying at a university or technikon this year? (Please mark one box in every row)

	Yes	No	
V8.13	1 ☐	2 ☐	Father / male guardian
V8.14	1 ☐	2 ☐	Mother / female guardian
V8.15	1 ☐	2 ☐	Brother
V8.16	1 ☐	2 ☐	Sister

H.7 Are any of your brothers or sisters graduates of a higher education institution?

V8.17 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

H.8 What kind of dwelling are you living in at present? (Please read the whole list before marking one box only)

V8.18 1 ☐ House or brick structure on a separate stand or yard

2 ☐ Traditional dwelling / hut / structure made of traditional materials

3 ☐ Flat in block of flats

4 ☐ Town / cluster / semi-detached house (simplex, duplex, triplex)

5 ☐ House / flat / room in back yard

6 ☐ Informal dwelling / shack in back yard

7 ☐ Informal dwelling / shack NOT in back yard, e.g. in an informal / squatter settlement

8 ☐ Room / flatlet not in back yard but on a shared property

9 ☐ Caravan or tent

10 ☐ Private ship / boat

11 ☐ Other (please specify):

V8.19

H.9 What sources of information are there in your current place of residence? (You may mark more than one box)

V8.20 ☐ None

V8.21 ☐ Books and / or encyclopedias and / or journals

V8.22 ☐ Newspapers

V8.23 ☐ Magazines

V8.24 ☐ Computer

V8.25 ☐ Internet / e-mail access

V8.26 ☐ Educational CDs

V8.27 ☐ Educational DVDs / videos

- V8.28 ☐ TV
 V8.29 ☐ DSTV
 V8.30 ☐ Other ((please specify):
 V8.31

H.10 Do you have a cell-phone? (Please mark one box only)

- V8.32 1 ☐ Yes
 2 ☐ No

H.11 Are you on contract or pre-paid? (Please mark one box only)

- V8.33 1 ☐ Contract
 2 ☐ Pre-paid

H.12 Which of the following modes of transport do you use on a daily basis? (You may mark more than one box)

- V8.34 ☐ Private car
 V8.35 ☐ Bus
 V8.36 ☐ Train
 V8.37 ☐ Bicycle
 V8.38 ☐ Taxi
 V8.39 ☐ Motorcycle
 V8.40 ☐ Other (please specify):
 V8.41

SECTION J: EXPERIENCE OF 2008

IF YOU ARE STUDYING AT A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION, PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS J.1 – J.3. IF NOT, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION J.4

J.1 How well have you performed, on average, in your studies so far this year? (Please mark one box only)

- V9.1 1 ☐ Better than you expected
 2 ☐ Worse than you expected → Please skip to Question J.3

J.2 To what extent have the following factors helped you to perform well in your studies this year? (Please mark one box in every row)

Not at all
 1 2 3 4 5
 To a very large extent

- V9.2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Quality of teaching
 V9.3 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Feeling secure on campus
 V9.4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Knowing my studies are paid for
 V9.5 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Studying with like-minded students
 V9.6 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Knowing I am studying at an institution with high academic standards
 V9.7 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Having a space where I can study in peace and quiet
 V9.8 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ My Grade 12 marks
 V9.9 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ My academic performance in first / second year (mark only if applicable)
 V9.10 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ The foundation for higher education studies that my schooling laid for me
 V9.11 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ My interest in the programme I am studying
 V9.12 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ The influence of my lecturers
 V9.13 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ The quality of student life
 V9.14 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Having a positive attitude towards life
 V9.15 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Being self-confident
 V9.16 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Wanting to prove myself to those who thought I would not succeed
 V9.17 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ My social life

→ PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION J.4.

J.3 To what extent have the following factors prevented you from performing well in your studies this year? (Please mark one box in every row)

Not at all
 1 2 3 4 5
 To a very large extent

- V9.18 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Poor quality of teaching
 V9.19 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Feeling insecure on campus
 V9.20 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Being worried about how to finance my studies
 V9.21 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Studying with students with whom I have very little in common

V9.22	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Knowing I am studying at an institution that does not have high academic standards
V9.23	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Not having a space where I can study in peace and quiet
V9.24	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My Grade 12 marks
V9.25	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My academic performance in first / second year <i>(mark only if applicable)</i>
V9.26	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The poor preparation for higher education studies that my schooling gave me
V9.27	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My lack of interest in the programme I am studying
V9.28	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The negative influence of my lecturers
V9.29	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	The disappointing quality of student life
V9.30	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Having a negative attitude towards life
V9.31	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Having little self-confidence
V9.32	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Others not having expected me to succeed
V9.33	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My social life

V9.36

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

PLEASE:

- 1. CHECK THAT YOU HAVE ANSWERED ALL THE SECTIONS AND QUESTIONS THAT APPLY TO YOU. PLEASE REFER TO THE SUMMARY IN THE RIGHT-HAND COLUMN ON PAGE 3.**
- 2. REMEMBER TO PLACE THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE PRE-PAID ENVELOPE AND TO MAIL IT BACK TO THE HSRC.**

J.4 How happy are you with your present life situation (working, not working, studying, not studying, or a combination of these)?

	Not at all happy			Very happy	
	1	2	3	4	5
V9.34	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

J.5 To what extent do you feel that you have been able to choose your present life situation?

	Not at all			To a very large extent	
	1	2	3	4	5
V9.35	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

J.6 What is the main reason for your response to Question J.5?

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