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**Report B: A review of the current process of  
implementation of the Revised National  
Curriculum Statement in the Senior Phase**

**Report for the Curriculum Directorate, National  
Department of Education**

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to consider the current process of implementation of the RNCS in the Senior Phase. This involves a review of the provincial plans for the training of teachers in the Senior Phase. This review is considered in the light of monitoring and evaluation reports of the implementation process for the Intermediate Phase from 2004, and the Manual designed for training purposes described in Report A. Recommendations regarding the strengthening of the preparation of teachers to implement the curriculum will be made.

### **The training process**

The training process for the implementation of the RNCS in the Senior Phase follows a cascade model. In brief, the National Core Training Team (NCTT) was responsible for the design and delivery of the training manuals described in Report A. The NCTT then oversaw the training of the Provincial Core Training Team (PCTT) who were to train teachers. This final stage of the training process, the training of teachers, has been identified as the weakest link in the training chain. This report is concerned with this stage.

### **Sources of evidence**

Any consideration of what needs to be strengthened in assisting teachers to implement the RNCS at Senior Phase would need to consider both whether the RNCS is being implemented in Foundation and Intermediate Phase, and how it is being implemented. In the absence of such information it is necessary to rely on what sources and information are available. There are four sources of information that provide the basis for this report:

1. 'Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9. Orientation Programme – Senior Phase 2005' facilitator's and participant's manuals.
2. 'Monitoring report of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) Orientation programme for Intermediate Phase' (Magi, 2004)
3. The Khulisa evaluation of OBE/C2005 of training for the Intermediate Phase in the RNCS in Gauteng province
4. Telephonic interviews with Curriculum Heads or Teacher Development Heads in the nine provinces regarding the training strategy for the implementation of the RNCS in the Senior Phase

From these sources this review aims to identify some of the *potential* strengths and shortcomings for the implementation of the RNCS in the Senior Phase. Each information source is considered in a separate section, before conclusions are drawn, and brief recommendations are made.

In summary, the argument presented in this report is as follows: If we consider the Manual, and evaluation reports on the training in Intermediate Phase, a number of potential problems can be identified for the training in Senior Phase. The provincial plans are considered bearing these potential problems in mind, and a speculative assessment as to whether the provincial plans are likely to address the problems is made. On the basis of these speculations, recommendations are made. The argument is necessarily tentative given the available information. This is explained further below.

#### **'REVISED NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT GRADES R-9. ORIENTATION PROGRAMME – SENIOR PHASE 2005' FACILITATOR'S AND PARTICIPANT'S MANUALS.**

The manuals provide the official guide for provinces in determining their implementation training strategy. These guides may be used selectively by the provinces, or may be used as they are, for the training of the provincial officials who will train teachers. The Manuals are arranged as a series of lesson plans with an extensive set of activities dealing with both Generic and Learning Area specific issues. As an expression on the official, suggested strategy for the training, Report A identifies some of the strengths and weaknesses of these Manuals. These include, in summary, the following:

- a) The training programme has a heavy political bias. There is an overemphasis on policy, and training in the Generic aspects of the RNCS is prioritized.
- b) There were a number of significant gaps in the training. The first is the assessment strategy for the RNCS Senior Phase, which is not sufficiently developed at the policy level as yet. The second key issues is that of the split phase and bridging institutional divides between primary and secondary schools in the development of Learning Programmes. Thirdly, a number of complex issues relating to classroom practice are not or insufficiently addressed, such as the issues of clustering, integration and the links and relationships between different design elements/concepts in the RNCS. Finally, issues pertaining to the use of LTSM are not addressed at all.
- c) The Manual provides a comprehensive guide for the training of the implementation of the RNCS, but needs to be used selectively, or streamlined and focused towards issues relating to teachers' practical implementation of the curriculum in their classrooms.

It is possible to conclude on the basis of the findings from Report A, that should the training manual be used as it is in the provinces there are a number of potential shortcomings. Teachers will not have sufficient exposure to the Learning Areas they are required to teach, practical issues of implementation and certain complex issues

in the RNCS will not be adequately addressed, and the focus of the training will largely be on Generic aspects. The variation between provinces in their use of the manual will be discussed later. Below, two reports on the training process at the Intermediate level in 2004 are considered, in order to assess the issues that arose there.

### **'MONITORING REPORT OF THE REVISED NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT (RNCS) ORIENTATION PROGRAMME FOR INTERMEDIATE PHASE' (MAGI, 2004)**

The 'Monitoring report of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) Orientation programme for Intermediate Phase' (Magi, 2004) was based on a series of interviews and observations during the process of training the PCTT by the NCTT for the implementation of the RNCS at Intermediate Phase. The report is largely descriptive and evaluative, rather than analytical, and therefore focuses on the processes undertaken, and the feelings and responses of participants to the process. Neglected in this report is a systematic and valid account of what learning took place in the training and the quality of that learning. A typical example is the following, which reflects on the introduction of theories and policies in the training sessions:

"While language issues and the assessment policy was done very well in most provinces, a lot of questions around these issues were asked and responses from some facilitators was not always convincing or left some gaps" (Magi, 2005:14).

What 'done very well' entails is not explained, which 'some facilitators' is not addressed, and what was not 'convincing' or where the 'gaps' were is not dealt with. Thus the report provides extremely limited explanatory material for the strengths and weaknesses of the training.

Further, in eliciting responses from the PCTT participants, only those of participants in the Western Cape were considered to determine the reception of the orientation programme at the level of the workshop.

Nonetheless, and taking the inadequacies of the report into account, a number of issues were extracted from the report. Although in general very positive about the orientation training, a number of concerns were raised:

- a) The question of **assessment** and clarity around procedures, and the use of assessment standards was used. There was no clarity on recording, and questions such as 'How does one record against Assessment Standards?' were not addressed.

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- b) The quality of the manual used in the training was raised: “The biggest problem was the manual. While there were very good sections this was not the case throughout the manual. This put a lot of pressure on the facilitators to re-organise material and to prepare activities in between workshop sessions”. (Magi, 2005:20). Specifics as to the problems with the material, and possible redress was not addressed in the report.
  - c) The report found from observations and interviews that much of the success of the training depended on the individual presenters: “Not all team members had an extensive background and in depth knowledge of OBE and the RNCS” (Magi, 2005:18)

It is important to consider points b) and c) together. If the quality of the manual was inadequate, then facilitators would be required to re-organise material and prepare activities, which would require a relatively high level of expertise. Should the trainers be highly skilled, they could compensate for lacks in the manual. Conversely, where trainers are less expert, an excellent manual could provide guidance and support. However, the problem of inadequately prepared instructors and manuals together could potentially greatly compromise the quality of the training.

Despite the shortcomings of the ‘Monitoring report of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) Orientation programme for Intermediate Phase’ (Magi, 2004) the importance of both the quality of trainers and course materials is highlighted. The question of assessment, which is raised here and dealt with at length in Report A, will be returned to below.

## THE KHULISA EVALUATION OF OBE/C2005 OF TRAINING FOR THE INTERMEDIATE PHASE IN THE RNCS IN GAUTENG PROVINCE

A caveat must be introduced again in considering the lessons from ‘The Khulisa evaluation of OBE/C2005 of training for the Intermediate Phase in the RNCS in Gauteng province’. The evaluation was conducted in Gauteng only, where HEIs were responsible for all the training. The report does not therefore give a national picture of training, where in the majority of provinces training is done by Subject Advisors.

The Khulisa evaluation aimed to answer the question: *How adequate is the 2004 Intermediate Phase Preparation and training of Educators for implementing the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2005?* The study was conducted at HEI training sessions, in Gauteng.

In order to address its central question, the evaluation considered three issues. Firstly it determined the level of **satisfaction** of teachers with regards to different aspects of the training, including organisational aspects, course manuals and course

content, as well as satisfaction with regard to facilitators and methodologies used. Secondly, **Educator expectations** were evaluated to determine the 'degree of importance for different aspects of OBE/C2005'. The same items were evaluated after the training to determine to what degree these expectations were met. Thirdly, knowledge pertaining to different aspects of OBE/C2005 before training and the **learning/change in knowledge** that occurred as a result of the training were evaluated. The evaluators used observations, a Pre-test post-test questionnaire, and a short interview with the facilitator in gathering data for the study.

Although careful and thorough, the research is of limited interest in indicating the strengths and weaknesses of the Intermediate Phase RNCS implementation training. The focus on educator expectations and satisfaction undermines the Reports potential to tell us about what learning took place in the training. Overall, teachers were extremely positive about their expectations having been met, and they were very satisfied with most aspects of the training. In considering learning or change in knowledge that occurred as a result of the training, the measurement of this is confined to a small number of indicators which do not give a comprehensive picture of what teachers learnt in the training. Six questions were used to measure learning/change in knowledge, and two examples are given below. It is noticeable that in the first question relating to planning, the vocabulary of C2005 is used (Whole school plan and Learning Unit), rather than that of the RNCS (Learning Programme and Lesson Plan).

<b>Planning:</b> The planning questions and results are reflected below. Respondents were provided with possible options and were asked to choose the correct response. The questions can be found in the appendix.	
<b>Question 1</b> It is a phase long plan that provides a framework for planning, organizing and managing classroom practice for each grade within that phase. It specifies the scope for teaching, learning and assessment and also serves as a tool for ensuring that the Learning Outcomes are effectively and comprehensively attended to in a sequential and balanced way across the phase.	<b>Answer:</b> Whole School Plan
<b>Question 2</b> It is a year-long plan of how teaching and learning will be sequenced and paced in a particular grade. It is a delivery tool; a means of working towards the achievement of the Learning Outcomes specified in the Learning Programme and incorporates the Assessment Standards that will be achieved in the grade.	<b>Answer:</b> Work Schedule
<b>Question 3</b> It is a final level of planning for teaching and learning activities drawn from the Work Schedule. This could range from a single activity to a few weeks teaching and learning cycle described concretely and in detail.	<b>Answer:</b> Learning Unit

Respondents were asked to provide a definition and an example of a Learning Outcome, Critical Outcome and an Assessment Standard in both the Pre-Test and the Post-Test.
<b>Question 1</b> Learning Outcome: <i>"What is meant by a Learning Outcome?" and "Describe and provide an example"</i>
<b>Question 2</b> Critical Outcome: <i>"What is meant by a Critical Outcome?" and "Describe and provide an example"</i>
<b>Question 3</b> Assessment Standard: <i>"What is meant by a Assessment Standard?" and "Describe and provide an example"</i>

It is arguable that these questions provide a valid measure of changes in learning/change in knowledge. The questions test teachers' factual recall, and are procedural. They do not test for understanding or the integration of concepts: with each other, with the broader design of the curriculum, or in relation to practice. Not surprisingly, teachers did not score very highly on the last three questions of the

test shown above, and the report concludes that “The number of responses that indicated that participants were unsure about the difference between Learning Outcomes, Critical Outcomes and Assessment Standards”. The report does acknowledge, however, that the test is limited: “For future training, it is suggested that the manner of teaching is such that the participants are not merely asked to repeat what they have learnt, but also to have the ability to practically apply the concepts that they have learnt in the classroom”.

It remains perplexing that one of the findings of the evaluation is that, despite an overall positive evaluation of the training courses on all three levels, the report found that teachers “experienced a decrease in their sense of confidence in their own ability to implement OBE/C2005 by the end of the training”. The report does not explore in any detail, or with reference to content, design and methodology of the course, why this may be the case.

Once again, having pointed out the limitations of the evaluation, a number of points are extracted which are relevant to the discussion here. These are points that indicate problems with the training at the Intermediate Phase, and in the case of the Gauteng evaluation, they are few though pertinent. They focus on the issues of assessment and the use of LTSM.

## **LTSM**

The report states that both in this evaluation, and the six that had been conducted in previous years, the use of LTSM was one of the weakest areas of implementation in all grades. The report concludes that the use and selection of LTSM as a topic “did not receive too much attention in the training sessions”.

## **Assessment**

Again in reference to the evaluation of Intermediate Phase, and in relation to the six previous evaluations, the report argues that assessment is the component of classroom implementation that teachers struggled with the most. “It is also a complex area that is supported by various assessment policies, circulars and recording forms”. They argue that assessment was not integrated into the planning process from the start.

## **Discussion**

From a consideration of the ‘Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9. Orientation Programme – Senior Phase 2005’ facilitator’s and participant’s manuals, the ‘Monitoring report of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) Orientation programme for Intermediate Phase’ (Magi, 2004), and ‘The Khulisa



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evaluation of OBE/C2005 of training for the Intermediate Phase in the RNCS in Gauteng province', a number of potential problems for the training of teachers in the Senior Phase are identified. It is stressed that these are *potential* problems, extrapolated from the evaluations and review of the manual, and are based largely on incomplete information. They include:

- a) Assessment, and managing its requirements, are not adequately addressed in the training
- b) The success of the training is reliant on facilitator expertise, which in the past has proved uneven
- c) The Manual is in need of revision and strengthening (see Report A)
- d) There is an overt focus on generic issues to the neglect of Learning Area specifics, and classroom practice.
- e) The crucial question of LTSM is not addressed
- f) Significant gaps in the manual, including the split phase and bridging institutional divides between primary and secondary schools in the development of Learning Programmes.
- g) A number of complex issues relating to classroom practice are not or insufficiently addressed, such as the issues of clustering, integration and the links and relationships between different design elements/concepts in the RNCS.

In the light of these potential problems, the provincial plans for the training of teachers in the implementation of the RNCS are considered below.

## **PROVINCIAL PLANS FOR THE TRAINING STRATEGY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RNCS SENIOR PHASE**

This section reports on what provinces claim they are doing, based on interviews with Curriculum and Teacher Development Heads in each of the provinces. In most cases the information is drawn from a single source, the interviews, and in some cases documented plans<sup>1</sup>. The information also varied to some extent in terms of level of detail provided.

In each of the provinces, either the Curriculum Development Head or the Head of Teacher Development was asked a number of questions regarding their plans for the implementation of the RNCS in the Senior Phase later this year. Their responses reveal a substantial amount of variation between the provinces, along the following dimensions:

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<sup>1</sup> All provinces were contacted, except for Free State, where officials could not be reached in the time available. Documentation from the Free State provided limited information of the content of training. Free State is therefore largely excluded from the discussion in this section.

- a) The use of the Manual in the development of the training course
- b) The focus of the initial training of teachers
- c) Plans for the on-going support of teachers in the implementation of the RNCS, including supporting documentation
- d) Provision of Learning Area specific expertise in the training of teachers.
- e) Considering and dealing with the split phase

Prior to discussing each of these dimensions, a brief description of each of the provinces plans is given below.

### *Gauteng*

The Gauteng training consists of a five-day programme (40 hours). The training is to be done exclusively by the HEIs. The Gauteng Education Department has devised its own training Guides, using the Manuals as a guide. These Guides were still being finalized at the time of this report. The focus of the training in the province is similar to that of the Manual, consisting of the same balance of Generic and Learning Area Specific training. The province has devised some of their own activities, however, and the Guide contains a mix of their own and the Manual's activities. Learning Area specialists in all eight Learning Areas will be available for the Learning Area specific training.

### *Eastern Cape*

In the Eastern Cape an initial 5 day training is planned, where teachers will be trained for three days in Generic issues, and two days in a specific Learning Area. A further series of two day workshops will be held for the Learning Areas, so that teachers are able to attend a second Learning Area Specific training. So, in total each teacher will receive seven days of training. Subject Advisors have been trained to conduct the training. The Manual has been 'provincialized' – the Generic section is used as it is, but for the Learning Areas the province has developed an adapted training programme.

### *Free State*

Free state plans to train all teachers in the Senior Phase in 2005, and to hold follow up workshops for Grade 8 and 9 in 2006 and 2007. Teachers will receive three days of Generic training, and training in Learning Area groupings.

### *Kwa-Zulu Natal*

Training in Kwa-Zulu Natal consists of 233 workshops for its teachers, who range between 10 000 and 12 000 in number. The training is five days long and follows the schedule as set out in the Manual. Subject advisors will conduct all the training. They were a preferred option to the HEIs, as according to the provincial official, the “HEIs showed no commitment to the process. The Subject Advisors are better for training because they are accountable and must deliver”. The course generally uses the manual as is, but the province has decided to do more on assessment (specifics not provided). The Generic section will be used as it is. Examples to suit the Kwa-Zulu Natal context, particularly in the lesson plans and in the planning would be incorporated into the Learning Area specific training.

### *Limpopo*

Training in Limpopo is to take place over five days (as set out in the Manual). Some of these training sessions will be split over weekends. Subject advisors and EMDC staff, and District Officers will conduct the training. The manual is to be used exactly as it is

### *Mpumalanga*

The training period in Mpumalanga is to be 4 days long, and will be conducted by Subject Advisors. The Manual has been “modified for local issues”. No Generic section will be included. The province is working on the assumption that through the Intermediate Phase training most teachers had gone through generic training, as there are very few teachers who only teach grade 7 and don’t teach in the Intermediate Phase as well. Therefore Learning Area specific training will take place for the four days, using the Learning Area specific training sections from the Manuals as they are with minor adjustments for the provincial context

### *Northern Cape*

In the Northern Cape teachers attend training sessions on one of four four-day training slots. Subject Advisor specialists for all eight Learning Areas will be available at all training sessions. The Manual has been substantially adapted in this province. In the Generic section the training will focus on policy transformation, assessment and diversity. In the Learning Area specific training the unique features of the Learning Areas, scope, OBE assessment, diversity, multi level teaching and planning will be addressed. The Generic section is half a day (5 hours) and the Learning Area training consists of training in two subjects for ten and a half hours per subject.

*North West*

Training in the North West is to be held during the third term, just after the July break. The training is five days long as set out in the Manual. Subject advisors will do the training. The Manual is to be used exactly as it is.

*Western Cape*

In the Western Cape training will be for 4 and half days. HEIs will conduct the training. The training focuses on Generics issues on the first three days. On the remaining two days teachers focus on planning, developing work Schedules and Lesson Plans that they can take away for their own use. Learning Area specialists will not be available for all eight Learning Areas at all schools, hence the focus on Generics. This training follows Learning Area specific training in the form of workshops that were conducted in the second term.

**The use of the Manual in the development of the training course**

In three of the provinces the Manual is being used for training as it stands. No changes have been made to the Manual, and the timetable for the training provided in the Manual is to be used. In five of the provinces, the Manual has been modified in different ways and to differing degrees. Table 1 below indicates which provinces have modified the Manuals and which have not.

**Table 1: How provinces are using the Manual**

<b>Province</b>	<b>Use of Manual</b>
Gauteng	Modified
Eastern Cape	Modified
Kwa-Zulu Natal	Unmodified
Limpopo	Unmodified
Mpumalanga	Modified
Northern Cape	Modified
North West	Unmodified
Western Cape	Modified

In the Western Cape a judicious selection of Activities is made from the Manual, so that a few Activities are dealt with on each day of the training in relation to particular topics. Additional Activities particular to the province (such as evaluating the WCED Learning Programmes) are also included. The training is largely based on the Generic Section, Learning Area specific training having been done in the form of prior workshops. Gauteng's training is also based on the Manual, but it too has developed a mix of their own and the Manual's activities.

In Mpumalanga no Generic training will be done, and the Learning Area Sections will be used as they are, with minor adjustments. In the Northern Cape the Manual is used selectively, with the Generic component being simplified, and the Learning Area sections adapted. In the Eastern Cape the Generic Section of the Manual is to be used as it is, but the Learning Area Sections adapted, and more time given to the Learning Area training.

The North West and Limpopo will use the Manual as it is, and Kwa-Zulu Natal aims to make minor changes in terms of examples in the Learning Areas.

The training in the provinces that base their training on the Manual as it is is likely to suffer as a result of the shortcomings in the Manual outlined in Report A and above, with too much focus on the Generic aspects of the RNCS, and significant issues either being not addressed or insufficiently dealt with. In the other provinces there is substantial variation in the use of the Manual. Most provinces have attempted to extend the Learning Area component, except for Gauteng which maintains the balance in the Manual, and the Western Cape which focuses largely on Generic issues.

### **The focus of the initial training of teachers**

In the Western Cape a number of preparatory training activities were put in place prior to the training that is to take place in July. Firstly, 300 two-hour workshops to 'unpack the Learning Areas' were held in the second term after school. Resource material documents per Learning Area was given to each school attending the workshop. This was to enable the Grade 7 teacher to "understand how their work in Grade 7 linked to the whole Senior Phase.

Also in preparation for the training exemplars of Learning Programmes for the Senior Phase for each Learning Area were provided to schools. The focus of the five-day training then was on Generic issues, as well as evaluating the Learning Programmes, and using them to develop Work Schedules and Lesson Plans.

In the Northern Cape there is a substantial move away from Generic training. In the words of the provincial official interviewed, "There is too much policy. It is a curriculum workshop not policy workshop". The province has extracted the teaching, learning and assessment issues relevant to the RNCS from the policies, and "tabularized them for presentation to teachers". The province has also shortened the Assessment (generic) section, and assessment is dealt with in the context of the Learning Areas. The focus of the training is on "*how to do things* – develop a rubric, develop a memo". There is a strong focus on classroom practice.

In Mpumalanga there will be no Generic training, based on the assumption that teachers will have received this in the course of the Intermediate Phase training. In

the Eastern Cape a balance is achieved between Learning Area specifics and Generic training by extending the Learning Area specific training.

The focus in the North West, Limpopo and Kwa-Zulu Natal is reflected in the Manual, and the mix of Generic and Learning Area specifics in Gauteng will be similar to the Manual. Based on the limited information available it is possible to classify the focus of the training in the provinces in Table 2 below. Those provinces using the Manual as is are classified as having a Generic focus.

**Table 2: Focus of the training in the different provinces**

Province	Focus		
	Generic	Learning Area Specific	Balance
Gauteng			
Eastern Cape			
Kwa-Zulu Natal			
Limpopo			
Mpumalanga			
Northern Cape			
North West			
Western Cape			

Again, based on the limited information available, it is possible to conclude that in most cases the focus of the initial training is on Generic issues, two provinces strike a balance between Generic and Learning Area specific training, and two focus on Learning Area training. These findings do not take into account follow-up and on-going training for teachers in the provinces, which is addressed below.

### **Plans for the on-going support of teachers in the implementation of the RNCS, including supporting documentation**

In the Western Cape schools have been provided with exemplar Learning Programmes (with the caveats that these are provisional and will be revised, and are *exemplars* only). Additional resource material has also been made available to teachers in the form of resource packs. The Northern Cape is also developing their own Learning Programmes and work schedules, and a range of lesson plans that teachers can take away with them and use. In the Eastern Cape the official expressed the need to develop Learning Programmes for the province. He said he was aware of processes in this regard in the Western Cape and Fort Hare, but lacked the budget for their development in the current year.

In Gauteng the province has developed materials for on-going teacher support, focusing on Learning Area specific content and improving assessment practices.

Limpopo and Kwa-Zulu Natal both plan to have follow up workshops with teachers in Learning Area specifics. The Western Cape plans on-going support in targeted schools.

It became clear in the interviews that provinces vary in their capacity to develop on-going training and support for teachers. There is also variation in the specificity of what on-going training would entail. Whereas some provinces have developed support material for teachers, other provinces are relying on what teachers receive in the initial training.

### **Provision of Learning Area specific expertise in the training of teachers.**

Significant problems arose with respect to some provinces in the provision of Learning Area specialists for training in the Learning Area specifics. Several provinces conceded that they were not able to make provision for Learning Area specialists at all sessions. This issue was complicated by the fact that most teachers at the Grade 7 level teach more than one subject. In some provinces provision was made for teachers to attend two different Learning Area specific sessions with Learning Area specialists. In other provinces, the Learning Area specific training would be done by the Subject Advisors available, regardless of their Learning Area expertise.

In Kwa-Zulu Natal the provincial official stated that both the need for Subject Advisor specialists, and the fact that teachers taught more than one Subject Area presented major challenges. Their solution was to provide in depth training in whatever the Subject Advisor at the session happened to be a specialist in. They planned to have follow up sessions before the end of the year with experts. The plan in the initial training was to have teachers exposed to a Learning Areas regardless of whether they were teaching it, and it was acknowledged that there would be a bias at each session. The argument made was that at primary level teachers were more generalists than specialists, and therefore this approach was appropriate. The claim was also made that "All teachers will get a bit of all the Learning Areas in the initial training"

In Mpumalanga, where the availability of Learning Area specialists was also a problem, a slightly different argument was made to that of Kwa-Zulu Natal. The official in Mpumalanga said that "Once an educator is an OBE convertant, then they should be able to approach any Learning Area. Exposing them to one Learning Area won't make them unable to teach others". The province planned to expose teachers to the subject of their choice in the initial training and then provide further Learning Area training later in the year.

Limpopo too expresses the difficulties: "We will make sure that teachers are given an opportunity to attend training in both. But it is becoming increasingly difficult. You end up training generally, but not in specific Learning Areas". The official in this province claimed that all the PCTT trainers had been trained as specialists in all eight Learning Areas, and were therefore qualified to teach any of the Learning Areas.

The views expressed by the officials in Kwa-Zulu Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo are cause for serious concern. The lack of provision in the training of Learning Area experts is likely to significantly compromise the understanding and application of the principles and concepts of the RNCS in relation to particular Learning Areas. This relates especially to the issue of knowledge focus/concepts/content of Learning Areas, which Report A indicated needed specific attention.

In Gauteng, the Northern Cape, Eastern Cape and North West Learning Area specialists were to be provided for the Learning Area specific training. Where teachers taught more than one Learning Area, parallel or additional training sessions were provided where teachers could rotate between different Learning Areas.

In the Western cape Learning Area specialists conducted the two day Learning Area workshops. The provincial official did point out the difficulties in always providing specialists: "It depends where the teachers are. It is difficult in rural areas to cater for all teachers. There will be follow up training for intensified support, especially with an emphasis on professional development and the use of LTSM".

### **Considering and dealing with the split phase**

A major challenge to the implementation of the RNCS in the Senior Phase is the fact that the Phase is split over primary and secondary schools. All provinces acknowledge this as a problem in training, especially in relation to the training of teachers in planning Learning Programmes. The latter are plans which reflect progression across the whole phase.

While some of the provinces have either produced or plan to produce exemplars of Learning Programmes for teachers to use, other provinces appear to be struggling to resolve the issue.

In the North West the plan is to show planning across the Phase in the Generic Section, but then to focus on Grade 7. The official stated "This is a difficult issue, and we foresee problems in Grade 8 and 9 as well".



In the Eastern Cape plans were expressed to develop Learning Programme exemplars, the Northern Cape was in the process of developing exemplars of learning programmes across the Senior Phase to give to teachers, and in the Western Cape these exemplars had already been developed and distributed to schools.

In Mpumalanga the issue was understood as requiring a rearrangement of institutions: "It is a problem. The Department needs to start aligning schools. That is, transferring the Grade 7 to the Senior school. But this brings a number of problems, not least the fact that there are few teachers who teach Grade 7 only".

## **Discussion**

It is clear that the issues drawn from the manual and the evaluation reports presented in the discussion at the end of section 3 are unevenly addressed in the provinces. The issues of facilitator expertise, assessment and LTSM do not appear to be significantly addressed in all provinces. The quality of the manual remains an issue, given that most provinces have constructed their training programme closely on this model. There appears also to be an overt focus on Generic issues to the neglect of Learning Area specifics, and classroom practice.

The split phase and bridging institutional divides between primary and secondary schools in the development of Learning Programmes is also unevenly addressed by the provinces. It is not possible to ascertain from the information given whether the number of complex issues relating to classroom practice are addressed (such as the issues of clustering, integration and the links and relationships between different design elements/concepts in the RNCS). It is assumed where training is based exclusively on the Manual, they are not.

## **CONCLUSION**

This report has been based on incomplete evidence, and on evaluations which lack validity and reliability in significant ways. Nonetheless, a provisional and speculative picture has been put together of the potential problems that may arise in the training of teachers for the implementation of the RNCS at Senior Phase. Without thorough and comprehensive information, firm conclusions and recommendations cannot be made.

Thus the first recommendation to be made is that a thorough evaluation of the training and implementation of the RNCS in the Senior Phase is undertaken with urgency. There can be no substitute for sound research which identifies what is actually taking place in order to inform further training and support for teachers.

That said, a number of conclusions are drawn from the report, and further recommendations are made below relating to the points raised in the report.

It is clear from the report that there is significant variation between provinces in their capacity and vision regarding the implementation of the RNCS in the Senior Phase. All provinces, however, relied substantially on the Manual provided for the training, with some provinces using the Manual as is, and others using it selectively or as a guide.

The focus for the training in the different provinces varies, as do their strategies and plans for the on-going support of teachers. The issue of Learning Area expertise, and the challenge of training teachers in a number of learning areas is dealt with differently, with some provinces raising cause for concern. The issue of teachers teaching a number of different Learning Areas is not taken into consideration in the planning of teacher training as represented in the Manual. The assumption in the timetabling is that each teacher would initially be trained in a single Learning Area.

The issue of the split phase remains unresolved.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) A thorough **national evaluation**, in order to guide further training as well as the training for the implementation of the RNCS in Grades 8 and 9, is recommended. What this evaluation would need to take account of is represented in Appendix A. This needs to be undertaken urgently, preferably prior to training in the implementation in Grades 8 and 9.
- b) Given that several provinces are wholly reliant on the **Manual** for their training, follow up training should be designed at the national level. This should focus exclusively on Learning Area specific training, and should specify that this training be conducted by Learning Area specialists. The significant **gaps** in the manual identified above should be addressed in this training programme. In particular the issues of **assessment** and the use of **LTSM** should be addressed.
- c) The issue of the quality, expertise and availability of **trainers** needs to be addressed. As well as improving the Manuals for the training of the PCTT, alternative forms of training should be developed, in particular for reaching rural areas, and provinces where the number of **Subject Area specialists** is problematic. These could include:
  - the identification, use and compensation of expert teachers in the training;
  - the development of videos to be used in training;

- model Learning Programmes, Work Schedules and Lesson Plans developed at national level which teachers are able to use selectively;
  - A nationally developed set of overhead transparencies and training notes for all learning areas which could be made available to all schools.
- d) At the National level, the **sharing** of resources and expertise between provinces needs to be facilitated. In particular, this would avoid unnecessary repetition in the development of **additional support materials**.
- e) At the **policy** level specific issues need to be resolved. The one is related to **assessment** policies. These need to be updated and clarified so that they can inform training. The second is the issue of the **split phase**, and concrete ways of dealing with the issue need to be made available to all provinces.

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## APPENDIX A: PROPOSED EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RNCS IN THE SENIOR PHASE IN ORDER TO INFORM ON-GOING TEACHER SUPPORT

The following table presents in summary form a suggested design for a comprehensive evaluation of the implementation of the RNCS in the Senior Phase for the period 2005 – 2006. The purpose of the evaluation would be to inform on-going teacher support, as well as to inform the training and implementation strategy for Grade 8 and 9, and also FET.

Time	Evaluation activity	Focus	Sample
July – November 2005	Observations of training sessions in all 9 provinces	- Content of course - Facilitator expertise	3 training workshops per province
August 2005	Evaluation of training materials used in all nine provinces	- Contents of materials - Quality of materials	All provincial materials
September 2005	Interviews with trainers regarding the training	- Strengths and weaknesses of course with respect to RNCS and its practical implementation	20 trainers per province
September 2005	Interviews with teachers regarding the training	- Strengths and weaknesses of course with respect to RNCS and its practical implementation	20 teachers per province
October 2005	Interview with Departmental officials regarding plans for on-going teacher support	Contents of ongoing support Rationales for content of on-going support	All relevant officials in all provinces
<b>December 2005</b>	<b>Interim report</b>		
February 2006	Observations of Grade 7 teachers in all nine provinces	How RNCS is being implemented	10 teachers per province
February 2006	Interviews with teachers in all nine provinces regarding difficulties with implementation	Difficulties with actual implementation Suggestions for on-going support	10 teachers per province
March 2006	Interview with Departmental officials regarding	Difficulties with implementation and Plans for on-going teacher support	All relevant officials in all provinces
March 2006	Documentary review of on-going support materials in all nine provinces	Quality and contents of on-going support materials Inter-provincial comparisons of strengths and weaknesses of support materials	All provincial materials
<b>May 2006</b>	<b>Draft report on the training and implementation of the RNCS in the Senior Phase in all nine provinces</b>		
<b>June 2006</b>	<b>Discussion workshop with provincial and national officials</b>		
<b>July 2006</b>	<b>Final report</b>		