



"Revitalising and Transforming the Academic Profession"

**National Research and Innovation Dialogue
Implementing the New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP)**

Nature of the New Generation of Academics Programme

- The Staffing South Africa's Universities Framework (SSAUF) was approved by Minister Nzimande in February 2015.
- Once fully implemented and to scale, the SSAUF intends to address academic and professional staff development needs along the career continuum from recruitment to retirement.
- The New Generation of Academics (nGAP) is one of the 6 components within the SSAUF.
- The nGAP is a 6-year programme for each lecturer recruited onto the programme, and it is made up of a 3-year development component and a 3 year induction/early career component.
- In the 3-year development component, the nGAP lecturer is expected to benefit from substantial research development and teaching development opportunities, and to complete or make substantial progress towards a masters of doctoral degree, or undertake post-doctoral studies as appropriate. During this period the nGAP lecturer is expected to benefit from a 20% teaching workload allocation.
- In the latter three years the teaching workload is expected to increase reaching a full teaching load by the 6th year.
- The nGAP works on a cost-sharing basis, with the DHET paying the full salary (up to an agreed limit) for the first three years, and the university paying 25% of the salary in the 4th year, 50% in the 5th year and 75% in the 6th year. Thereafter the university takes full responsibility for the salary.
- The DHET also allocates substantial additional funding for each nGAP lecturer to undertake suitable development activities, to support his/her research, to benefit from the support of a dedicated mentor during the first four years, and to benefit from an international mobility experience.
- An important and non-negotiable principle underpinning the nGAP is that nGAP lecturers must be appointed on a permanent basis from the outset. This means that the employment of nGAP lecturers at universities must be carefully aligned to the university's staffing plan.

Implementing the New Generation of Academics Programme

- The first phase of the nGAP was initiated in 2015.

- The DHET allocated 125 posts, shared across 26 universities, with allocations largely based on enrolment size, in discipline areas that were determined by the universities.
- The full funds to support each nGAP lecturer over the full 6 years of the programme were transferred to universities in March 2015. A total amount of R271 855 875 was transferred which worked out to R2 174 879 per post.
- By the end of December 2015, a deadline imposed by the DHET for filling the posts, 100 posts have been filled, and the 100 lecturers comprise the first nGAP cohort. All are black South Africans, and there are 54 females and 46 males.
- Twenty five posts were not filled by the set deadline and these posts have been carried over to Phase 2 of the nGAP programme.
- The DHET has been able to secure funds amounting to R184 285 943 for Phase 2. This enabled 79 new nGAP posts to be allocated to universities in March 2106, at an amount of R2 332 733 per post. Funds have been transferred to universities.
- With the 25 posts that were carried over from Phase 1, there are a total of 104 posts for nGAP Phase 2.
- The DHET actively seeks partnerships with other organisations to support the implementation of the SSAUF. Two partnerships have been formalised thus far: (i) a partnership with the Newton Fund to enable UK mobility opportunities for qualifying nGAP lecturers and (ii) a partnership with the National Research Foundation that will provide research support grants to all nGAP lecturers.

Lessons learnt thus far

- Universities have reported that they have been able to attract a higher calibre of applicant through the nGAP.
- The programme has been able to attract qualifying applicants from the target groups, and there is no problem meeting the transformation goal set for the programme.
- Two universities have reported challenges meeting the salary expectations of some nGAP applicants, particularly in those disciplines which command a substantially higher salary outside academia.
- Communication – At the moment communication lines are still complex given the various partners involved in the programme, i.e. DHET, nGAP managers, nGAP lecturers, the mentors, the supervisors. There is a need to develop a better communication strategy and perhaps a web-based management system that enables more effective communication..
- Sufficient human resources are needed to manage the programme at the universities and at the DHET.
- The development component of the nGAP needs to be formally structured as a matter of urgency. Given the range and levels of appointment of nGAP lecturers it is clear that a one-size-fits-all approach to address development needs will not work.

- Relying on redirected funds (unspent Teaching Development Grant and Research Development Grant funds) will not enable the programme to go to scale. A dedicated and consistent source of funds is needed.