

THROUGHPUT RATE OF TVET COLLEGE NC(V)(NATIONAL CERTIFICATE VOCATIONAL) STUDENTS



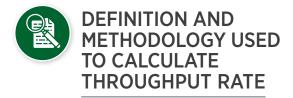
Information about throughput rates is crucial to understanding, among others, an education system's level of efficiency. Throughput rates provide insights into how quickly or slowly students move through the system. The slower the movement of students from enrolment to completion, the greater the cost to the system. Moreover, the slow movement of students through the system (which is caused largely by high levels of repetition) creates a bottleneck in the system, resulting in constraints to the number of new entrants admitted to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges. As the number of students repeating courses overlaps with new student enrolments, entry into required courses becomes harder for all to access. Bottlenecks can cause both the student and the institution to incur increased educational costs, waste time and delay completion. Low throughput rates impede student progress, increase costs, and impact negatively on teaching and learning, and on the ability of institutions to facilitate student success. Delays in the completion of qualifications entail a waste of resources both at individual and collective levels. They also deprive the economy of adequate numbers of new graduates.



To that effect, this Fact Sheet provides information and insights into the extent and nature of the throughput rate of TVET college students enrolled in the National Certificate (Vocational) (NC[V]) programmes. The NC(V), which is a three-year qualification, was introduced by the then Department of Education at public TVET colleges in 2007 to respond to the priority skills demands of the South African economy. TVET colleges continue to offer the NC(V); however, many stakeholders have expressed concern about the low numbers of students completing the full NC(V) qualification within expected time frames. Thus, insights from this Fact Sheet can be drawn upon to inform interventions to address relevant challenges and to improve accountability in the system.



Throughput rate is defined as the rate at which a student cohort successfully completes a qualification within the stipulated timeframe for that qualification.



Throughput rate is defined as the rate at which a student cohort successfully completes a qualification within the stipulated timeframe for that qualification.1 For the purposes of this Fact Sheet, the throughput rate is calculated by dividing the total number of students who completed NC(V) Level 4 in year 3 by the total number of new entrants (newly enrolled students) who enrolled for NC(V) Level 2 in year 1, multiplied by 100. This calculation is based on a comparison of the same cohort of students who enrolled, for the first time, in year 1 and who completed in year 3. For this Fact Sheet, NC(V) Level 2 enrolments from new entrants' data in 2017, 2018 and 2019 was merged with examinations data for 2019, 2020 and 2021. The TVET Management Information System (TVETMIS) database was used as the data source for new entrants' enrolment data, and the DHET National Examinations database was used as the data source for completion data.

The next iteration of the Fact Sheet will take into consideration the N+1 progression policy that provides students with a one-year grace period to complete their NC(V) programme.



- South African students' identity numbers were used as a unique identifier to compile the TVETMIS and National Examinations datasets. Consequently, records with passport numbers were excluded from the analysis.
- Exam-only² students who completed NC(V) Level 4 in year 3 were excluded from the analysis, because these students were not part of the cohort who enrolled in 2017.



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This section presents an overview of the extent, trends and patterns of throughput rates of South African TVET college students enrolled in the NC(V) qualification. Additional tables with detailed data are provided in the Annexure.

Figure 1 shows the trend in throughput rates over three years. The latest figure (the 2021 throughput rate) shows that 10.8% of the students who enrolled for NC(V) Level 2 in 2019 for the first time (as new entrants) completed this qualification within the expected time frame (of 3 years) in 2021. This figure reflects a decrease of 2.4 percentage points from the 2020 throughput rate.

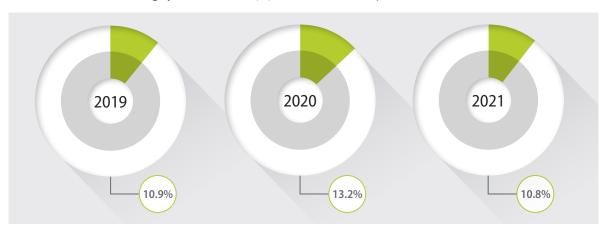
THE 2021 THROUGHPUT RATE SHOWS THAT



10.8%

of the students who enrolled for NC(V) Level 2 in 2019 for the first time (as new entrants) completed this qualification within the expected time frame (of 3 years) in 2021

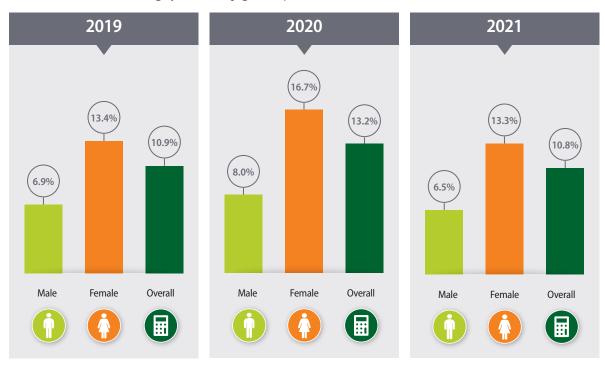
FIGURE 1: Overall throughput rate of NC(V) Level 2 students, 2019–2021



Note: The students who enrolled for NC(V) Level 2 in 2017 for the first time (as new entrants) were compared with those who completed NC(V) Level 4 in 2019, while 2018 new entrants were compared with those who completed NC(V) Level 4 in 2020, and 2019 new entrants were compared with those who completed NC(V) Level 4 in 2021.

Figure 2 shows that the throughput rate differs significantly across gender. The NC(V) Level 2 throughput rate for females is almost twice as that for males in all the years under review. In 2021, the throughput rate for females was 6.8 percentage points higher than the male throughput rate of 6.5%, and 2.5 percentage points higher than the overall throughput rate of 10.8%.

FIGURE 2: Overall throughput rate by gender, 2019–2021



Source: TVETMIS and National Examinations databases

Note: The students who enrolled for NC(V) Level 2 in 2017 for the first time (as new entrants) were compared with those who completed NC(V) Level 4 in 2019, while 2018 new entrants were compared with those who completed NC(V) Level 4 in 2020, and 2019 new entrants were compared with those who completed NC(V) Level 4 in 2021.

Table 1 indicates that in 2021, the highest throughput rate was in the *Education and Development* programme, which was 15.4 percentage points higher than the overall throughput rate of 10.8%. The second highest throughput of students was in *Office Administration*, which was 6.7 percentage points higher than the overall throughput rate. The lowest throughput rate of the 2019 NC(V) Level 2 cohort was in *Drawing Office Practice*, which was 7.0 percentage points lower than the overall throughput rate.

TABLE 1: Throughput rate by programme – enrolled in 2019 and completed in 2021

			mi
PROGRAMME TYPE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2019)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2021)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
Civil Engineering and Building Construction	4 353	294	6.8
2 Drawing Office Practice	52	2	3.8
3 Education and Development	1 336	350	26.2
4 Electrical Infrastructure and Construction	7 533	292	3.9
5 Engineering and Related Design	7 685	440	5.7
6 Finance, Economics and Accounting	3 344	271	8.1
7 Hospitality	3 937	577	14.7
8 Information Technology and Computer Science	3 598	139	3.9
9 Management	2 657	309	11.6
10 Marketing	2 267	182	8.0
11 Mechatronics	326	27	8.3
12 Office Administration	11 332	1 988	17.5
13 Primary Agriculture	1 870	292	15.6
14 Primary Health	366	63	17.2
15 Process Plant Operations	198	13	6.6
16 Safety in Society	2 285	248	10.9
17 Tourism	3 769	541	14.4
18 Transport and Logistics	1 531	259	16.9
19 Unspecified	21	-	-
Total	58 460	6 287	10.8

Source: TVETMIS and National Examinations databases

Table 2 shows that the TVET colleges with the highest throughput rate for the 2019 NC(V) Level 2 cohort were Waterberg TVET College (29.1%), Northlink TVET College (19.0%), Mthashana TVET College (18.3%) and College of Cape Town (16.9%). TVET colleges with the lowest throughput rate for the 2019 NC(V) Level 2 cohort were Central Johannesburg TVET College (2.5%), Flavius Mareka TVET College (3.0%) and King Sabata Dalindyebo TVET College (5.0%).

TABLE 2: Throughput rate by college – enrolled in 2019 and completed in 2021

			aii
COLLEGE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2019)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2021)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
1 Boland TVET College	568	82	14.4
2 Buffalo City TVET College	1 133	153	13.5
3 Capricorn TVET College	1 196	198	16.6
4 Central Johannesburg TVET College	726	18	2.5
5 Coastal TVET College	2 213	229	10.3
6 College of Cape Town	1 281	217	16.9
7 Eastcape Midlands TVET College	1 219	111	9.1
8 Ehlanzeni TVET College	1 441	126	8.7
9 Ekurhuleni East TVET College	1 960	120	6.1
10 Ekurhuleni West TVET College	3 637	414	11.4
11 Elangeni TVET College – Central	2 044	226	11.1
12 Esayidi TVET College	1 074	151	14.1
13 False Bay TVET College	606	92	15.2
14 Flavius Mareka TVET College	236	7	3.0
15 Gert Sibande TVET College	2 211	366	16.6
16 Goldfields TVET College	610	42	6.9
17 Ikhala TVET College	768	73	9.5
18 Ingwe TVET College	775	84	10.8
19 King Hintsa TVET College	611	62	10.1
20 King Sabata Dalindyebo TVET College	1 368	68	5.0
21 Lephalale TVET College	465	69	14.8
22 Letaba TVET College	986	121	12.3
23 Lovedale TVET College	588	80	13.6
24 Majuba TVET College	2 132	227	10.6
25 Maluti TVET College	1 670	212	12.7

TABLE 2: Throughput rate by college – enrolled in 2019 and completed in 2021 (continued)

			aii
COLLEGE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2019)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2021)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
26 Mnambithi TVET College	828	48	5.8
27 Mopani South East TVET College	1 584	156	9.8
28 Motheo TVET College	733	60	8.2
29 Mthashana TVET College	705	129	18.3
30 Nkangala TVET College	1 587	144	9.1
31 Northern Cape Rural TVET College	438	26	5.9
32 Northern Cape Urban TVET College	1 108	63	5.7
33 Northlink TVET College	856	163	19.0
34 Orbit TVET College	1 302	177	13.6
35 Port Elizabeth TVET College	1 015	92	9.1
36 Sedibeng TVET College	1 368	85	6.2
37 Sekhukhune TVET College	696	49	7.0
38 South Cape TVET College	509	46	9.0
39 South West Gauteng TVET College	2 825	316	11.2
40 Taletso TVET College	801	72	9.0
41 Thekwini TVET College	784	56	7.1
42 Tshwane North TVET College	1 102	126	11.4
43 Tshwane South TVET College	1 104	76	6.9
44 Umfolozi TVET College	1 587	177	11.2
45 Umgungundlovu TVET College	855	71	8.3
46 Vhembe TVET College	1 672	163	9.7
47 Vuselela TVET College	801	96	12.0
48 Waterberg TVET College	685	199	29.1
49 West Coast TVET College	1 258	105	8.3
50 Western TVET College	739	44	6.0
Total	58 460	6 287	10.8

Table 3 shows that the Western Cape had the highest throughput rate, which was 3.1 percentage points higher than the overall throughput rate of 10.8%. The province with the lowest throughput rate was the Northern Cape, with a throughput rate of 5.0 percentage points lower than the overall throughput rate.

TABLE 3: Throughput rate by province – enrolled in 2019 and completed in 2021

		S	î
PROVINCE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2019)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2021)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
Eastern Cape	7 477	723	9.7
Free State	3 249	321	9.9
Gauteng	13 461	1 199	8.9
Kwa-Zulu Natal	12 222	1 314	10.8
Limpopo	7 284	955	13.1
Mpumalanga	5 239	636	12.1
North West	2 904	345	11.9
Northern Cape	1 546	89	5.8
Western Cape	5 078	705	13.9
Total	58 460	6 287	10.8

Source: TVETMIS and National Examinations databases



This Fact Sheet indicates that only 10.8% of students who enrolled for the NC(V) in 2019 completed the qualification within the three-year expected time frame (in 2021), reflecting a decrease of 2.4 percentage points from the 2020 throughput rate. There are also significant differences in throughput rates across genders, programmes, TVET colleges and provinces, as shown in this Fact Sheet. There are inefficiencies in education investment when throughput rates are low; low throughput rates often result in smaller class sizes at later levels of the NC(V) programmes. This increases the costs per student, as generally the same amount of lecturing time is required even when classes become very small. Given the low throughput rates, the costs per graduate are therefore exceedingly high.

THIS FACT SHEET INDICATES THAT ONLY



OF STUDENTS WHO ENROLLED
FOR THE NC(V) IN 2019
COMPLETED THE QUALIFICATION
WITHIN THE THREE-YEAR
EXPECTED TIME FRAME



THIS REFLECTS A DECREASE FROM THE 2020 THROUGHPUT RATE



TABLE 1: Throughput rate by gender – enrolled in 2019 and completed in 2021

GENDER	NUMBER OF NEW ENTRANTS ENROLLED FOR NC(V) LEVEL 2 IN 2019	NUMBER COMPLETED NC(V) LEVEL 4 IN 2021	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
Male	22 008	1 425	6.5
Female	36 452	4 862	13.3
Overall	58 460	6 287	10.8%

Note: The students who enrolled for NC(V) Level 2 in 2019 for the first time (as new entrants) were compared with those students who completed NC(V) Level 4 in 2021.

TABLE 2: Throughput rate by gender – enrolled in 2018 and completed in 2020

GENDER	NUMBER OF NEW ENTRANTS ENROLLED FOR NC(V) LEVEL 2 IN 2018	NUMBER COMPLETED NC(V) LEVEL 4 IN 2020	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
Male Male	21 656	1724	8.0
Female	32 877	5 475	16.7
Overall	54 533	7 199	13.2%

Source: TVETMIS and National Examinations databases

Note: The students who enrolled for NC(V) Level 2 in 2018 for the first time (as new entrants) were compared with those students who completed NC(V) Level 4 in 2020.

TABLE 3: Throughput rate by gender - enrolled in 2017 and completed in 2019

GENDER	NUMBER OF NEW ENTRANTS ENROLLED FOR NC(V) LEVEL 2 IN 2017	NUMBER COMPLETED NC(V) LEVEL 4 IN 2019	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
Male	24 134	1666	6.9
Female	36 911	4 960	13.4
Overall	61 045	6 626	10.9%

Source: TVETMIS and National Examinations databases

TABLE 4: Throughput rate by programme – enrolled in 2018 and completed in 2020

				iii
PR	OGRAMME TYPE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2018)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2020)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
1	Civil Engineering and Building Construction	4 095	263	6.4
2	Drawing Office Practice	111	3	2.7
3	Education and Development	1 174	281	23.9
4	Electrical Infrastructure and Construction	7 195	459	6.4
5	Engineering and Related Design	7 422	609	8.2
6	Finance, Economics and Accounting	3 191	368	11.5
7	Hospitality	3 442	552	16.0
8	Information Technology and Computer Science	3 378	168	5.0
9	Management	2 670	412	15.4
10	Marketing	2 249	243	10.8
11	Mechatronics	335	50	14.9
12	Office Administration	10 196	2 201	21.6
13	Primary Agriculture	1 587	289	18.2
14	Primary Health	475	95	20.0
15	Process Plant Operations	189	13	6.9
16	Safety in Society	1 900	280	14.7
17	Tourism	3 596	616	17.1
18	Transport and Logistics	1 328	297	22.4
Tot	al	54 533	7 199	13.2

TABLE 5: Throughput rate by programme – enrolled in 2017 and completed in 2019

				iii
PROC	GRAMME TYPE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2017)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2019)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
	Civil Engineering and Building Construction	4 384	302	6.9
2 [Drawing Office Practice	90	4	4.4
3 E	Education and Development	1 416	324	22.9
4 E	Electrical Infrastructure and Construction	8 033	357	4.4
5 E	Engineering and Related Design	7 608	514	6.8
6 F	Finance, Economics and Accounting	3 897	379	9.7
7 F	Hospitality	3 964	494	12.5
	nformation Technology and Computer Science	3 538	148	4.2
9 N	Management	2 982	371	12.4
10 N	Marketing	2 858	223	7.8
11 N	Mechatronics	417	38	9.1
12 C	Office Administration	11 641	1 960	16.8
13 P	Primary Agriculture	1 822	248	13.6
14 P	Primary Health	340	64	18.8
15 P	Process Plant Operations	251	9	3.6
16 S	Safety in Society	2 249	302	13.4
17 T	ourism	4 007	608	15.2
18 T	ransport and Logistics	1 548	281	18.2
Total		61 045	6 626	10.9

TABLE 6: Throughput rate by college – enrolled in 2018 and completed in 2020

				ái
co	LLEGE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2018)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2020)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
1	Boland TVET College	568	88	15.5
2	Buffalo City TVET College	841	173	20.6
3	Capricorn TVET College	1 619	270	16.7
4	Central Johannesburg TVET College	767	19	2.5
5	Coastal TVET College	1 625	227	14.0
6	College of Cape Town for TVET	1 165	167	14.3
7	Eastcape Midlands TVET College	659	94	14.3
8	Ehlanzeni TVET College	1 515	136	9.0
9	Ekurhuleni East TVET College	1 765	153	8.7
10	Ekurhuleni West TVET College	3 590	450	12.5
11	Elangeni TVET College	1 914	241	12.6
12	Esayidi TVET College	472	118	25.0
13	False Bay TVET College	552	77	13.9
14	Flavius Mareka TVET College	351	15	4.3
15	Gert Sibande TVET College	1 928	484	25.1
16	Goldfields TVET College	511	24	4.7
17	Ikhala TVET College	479	88	18.4
18	Ingwe TVET College	929	121	13.0
19	King Hintsa TVET College	553	96	17.4
20	King Sabata Dalindyebo TVET College	780	78	10.0
21	Lephalale TVET College	380	46	12.1
22	Letaba TVET College	747	141	18.9
23	Lovedale TVET College	623	76	12.2
24	Majuba TVET College	1 948	244	12.5
25	Maluti TVET College	1 815	227	12.5
26	Mnambithi TVET College	504	57	11.3
27	Mopani South East TVET College	1 267	169	13.3
28	Motheo TVET College	593	59	9.9
29	Mthashana TVET College	416	83	20.0
30	Nkangala TVET College	1 291	148	11.5

TABLE 6: Throughput rate by college – enrolled in 2018 and completed in 2020 (continued)

			ái
COLLEGE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2018)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2020)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
31 Northern Cape Rural TVET College	416	20	4.8
32 Northern Cape Urban TVET College	486	57	11.7
33 Northlink TVET College	972	235	24.2
34 Orbit TVET College	1 228	207	16.9
35 Port Elizabeth TVET College	998	92	9.2
36 Sedibeng TVET College	1 935	250	12.9
37 Sekhukhune TVET College	670	57	8.5
38 South Cape TVET College	512	47	9.2
39 South West Gauteng TVET College	3 673	436	11.9
40 Taletso TVET College	674	94	13.9
41 Thekwini TVET College	842	106	12.6
42 Tshwane North TVET College	1 397	147	10.5
43 Tshwane South TVET College	708	72	10.2
44 Umfolozi TVET College	967	151	15.6
45 Umgungundlovu TVET College	932	100	10.7
46 Vhembe TVET College	1 958	225	11.5
47 Vuselela TVET College	887	76	8.6
48 Waterberg TVET College	1 362	269	19.8
49 West Coast TVET College	1 274	149	11.7
50 Western TVET College	475	40	8.4
Total	54 533	7 199	13.2

TABLE 7: Throughput rate by college – enrolled in 2017 and completed in 2019

			ail
COLLEGE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2017)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2019)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
1 Boland TVET College	680	100	14.7
2 Buffalo City TVET College	1 369	196	14.3
3 Capricorn TVET College	2 951	341	11.6
4 Central Johannesburg TVET College	637	14	2.2
5 Coastal TVET College	1 956	222	11.3
6 College of Cape Town for TVET	1 330	149	11.2
7 Eastcape Midlands TVET College	1 365	153	11.2
8 Ehlanzeni TVET College	1 645	121	7.4
9 Ekurhuleni East TVET College	1 488	111	7.5
10 Ekurhuleni West TVET College	3 362	383	11.4
11 Elangeni TVET College	1 642	155	9.4
12 Esayidi TVET College	1 388	187	13.5
13 False Bay TVET College	684	87	12.7
14 Flavius Mareka TVET College	335	7	2.1
15 Gert Sibande TVET College	2 741	539	19.7
16 Goldfields TVET College	650	46	7.1
17 Ikhala TVET College	799	117	14.6
18 Ingwe TVET College	1 279	90	7.0
19 King Hintsa TVET College	557	69	12.4
20 King Sabata Dalindyebo TVET College	1 371	89	6.5
21 Lephalale TVET College	206	22	10.7
22 Letaba TVET College	982	151	15.4
23 Lovedale TVET College	418	64	15.3
24 Majuba TVET College	1 903	209	11.0
25 Maluti TVET College	1 798	220	12.2
26 Mnambithi TVET College	769	50	6.5
27 Mopani South East TVET College	1 409	216	15.3
28 Motheo TVET College	539	47	8.7
29 Mthashana TVET College	612	82	13.4
30 Nkangala TVET College	1 259	171	13.6

TABLE 7: Throughput rate by college – enrolled in 2017 and completed in 2019 (continued)

			ái
COLLEGE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2017)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2019)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
31 Northern Cape Rural TVET College	505	13	2.6
32 Northern Cape Urban TVET College	292	25	8.6
33 Northlink TVET College	1 066	192	18.0
34 Orbit TVET College	1 360	192	14.1
35 Port Elizabeth TVET College	1 428	93	6.5
36 Sedibeng TVET College	1 631	151	9.3
37 Sekhukhune TVET College	815	39	4.8
38 South Cape TVET College	572	69	12.1
39 South West Gauteng TVET College	3 797	383	10.1
40 Taletso TVET College	887	79	8.9
41 Thekwini TVET College	1 033	95	9.2
42 Tshwane North TVET College	1 422	105	7.4
43 Tshwane South TVET College	1 002	76	7.6
44 Umfolozi TVET College	1 140	137	12.0
45 Umgungundlovu TVET College	1 239	80	6.5
46 Vhembe TVET College	1 521	113	7.4
47 Vuselela TVET College	695	50	7.2
48 Waterberg TVET College	718	161	22.4
49 West Coast TVET College	1 272	136	10.7
50 Western TVET College	526	29	5.5
Total	61 045	6 626	10.9

TABLE 8: Throughput rate by province – enrolled in 2018 and completed in 2020

		S	an
PROVINCE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2018)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2020)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
Eastern Cape	5 862	818	14.0
Free State	3 270	325	9.9
Gauteng	14 310	1 567	11.0
Kwa-Zulu Natal	9 620	1 327	13.8
Limpopo	8 003	1 177	14.7
Mpumalanga	4 734	768	16.2
North West	2 789	377	13.5
Northern Cape	902	77	8.5
Western Cape	5 043	763	15.1
Total	54 533	7 199	13.2

TABLE 9: Throughput rate by province – enrolled in 2017 and completed in 2019

		S	aii
PROVINCE	NUMBER ENROLLED (NC(V)2, 2017)	NUMBER COMPLETED (NC(V)4, 2019)	THROUGHPUT RATE (%)
Eastern Cape	8 586	871	10.1
Free State	3 322	320	9.6
Gauteng	13 865	1 252	9.0
Kwa-Zulu Natal	11 682	1 217	10.4
Q Limpopo	8 602	1 043	12.1
Mpumalanga	5 645	831	14.7
North West	2 942	321	10.9
Northern Cape	797	38	4.8
Western Cape	5 604	733	13.1
Total	61 045	6 626	10.9



DHET. 2021. *Dictionary of Terms and Concepts for Post-School Education and Training*, 2021. Available: https://www.dhet.gov.za/REGISTER%20OF%20INFORMATION%20STANDARDS%20%20POLICY/DHET%20017%20Dictionary%20of%20Terms%20and%20Concepts%20for%20Post-School%20 Education%20and%20Training,%202021.pdf



- 1. DHET. 2021. Dictionary of Terms and Concepts for Post-School Education and Training, 2021
- 2. These are students who do not formally enrol at the TVET College and do not attend classes/lectures; they only register to write examinations.



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Khuluvhe, M. 2023. *Throughput rate of TVET college NC(V)* (*National Certificate Vocational*) *students*. Department of Higher Education and Training, Pretoria.

This Fact Sheet is available on the DHET's website:



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