

Heher commission says public technical and vocational education should be free

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The Heher Commission's report on funding tertiary education has recommended that public technical and vocational education and training (TVET) education be fee-free.



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Currently, the Department of Higher Education and Training is meant to fund TVET students at an 80:20 ratio. However, this has fallen behind, according to the report, which President Jacob Zuma released on Monday.

"We recommend that this should move to 100% funding directly from the [department]," the commission said.

It said the priorities in the Community Education and Training (CET) sector, TVET colleges and universities needed to be balanced.

Money could not be diverted to universities just because this was where the focus was during the Fees Must Fall protests.

The commission said the TVET colleges tended to attract the poorer students who needed more financial and academic support.

It was recommended that students be given the support needed to spark the transformation of the TVET sector.

"The commission noted the lower earning power of TVET graduates and the challenges associated with their employability after graduation (often due to lack of workplace experience during training).

"If this desperate situation is left unattended, the quality of the lives of these graduates will not improve, and inverting the pyramid will not materialise in the foreseeable future," the commission said.

It was also recommended that stipends be made available through TVET colleges for students in need to cover the full cost of their study.

The commission said that if this was not possible, income-contingency loans should be made available to such students.

Source: BDpro

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