



ESHEC

ESWATINI HIGHER
EDUCATION COUNCIL

Ensuring relevance & excellence



NEWSLETTER

Oct-Dec 2023





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Ensuring
relevance &
excellence for global
competitiveness.



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1. INTRODUCTION



The Eswatini Higher Education (ESHEC) is a corporate body established in terms of the Higher Education Act of 2013. The entity is responsible for developing and implementing a quality assurance system for higher education, including registration, accreditation, institutional audits, quality promotion and standards development. This report outlines the performance of ESHEC in the period of October to December 2023. It presents progress in planned activities, opportunities and plans for the coming quarter and challenges of the reporting period.



2. GOVERNANCE

ESHEC Council Sub Committees and Council held the following scheduled meetings in the reporting period;

2.1. FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Finance Committee held one (1) scheduled meeting in this reporting period. The meeting was held on 12 October 2023. This was a scheduled quarterly meeting to review the second quarter ESHEC Finance and Administration reports and review other ESHEC operational matters. The agenda included the following: The Finance and Administration Second Quarter Report, an update on the implementation of the 2022/2023 Audit Report, and the review of the following draft policies for recommendations to Council: The Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy and Whistle Blowing and Reporting Processes, the Board Charter and the Board Policy on Handling Disability. The sub-committee further reviewed the Board Paper on Disposal of Assets.

2.2. ACADEMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (APDC) MEETINGS

The APDC held one (1) meeting in the reporting period. The meeting was held on 10 October 2023. This was a scheduled quarterly meeting to review second-quarter reports and institutional and programme assessment reports. On the agenda were the following reports: Review of Institutional Assessment Reports for

Southern Africa Nazarene University (SANU) and the Regent Business School Institutional. There was also a programme assessment report for Southern Africa Nazarene University (SANU) Bachelor of Education French (Primary).

2.3. ESHEC COUNCIL MEETINGS

In the reporting period, the ESHEC Council held one (1) scheduled board meeting, which was held on 18 October 2023. The meeting reviewed the ESHEC Second Quarter Performance Report with an update on the implementation of resolutions of the Council Retreat of July 4 to July 7, 2023. The panel also reviewed and made resolutions of the APDC Report, which included the Southern Africa Nazarene University (SANU) Institutional Assessment Report, Regent Business School Institutional Assessment Report and the Southern Africa Nazarene University (SANU) BA. French (Primary) Programme Assessment Report. The Finance Committee Report was also deliberated, and resolutions were made. It included the Finance and Administration Second Quarter Report (with an update on implementation of 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 Management letter (Audit reports, and approved the following ESHEC Policies, namely: the Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy, the Board Charter, the Board Policy on Handling Disability and the Board Paper on Disposal of Assets.

3. ESHEC STRATEGY 2023 - 2026

The ESHEC 2023 – 2025 Strategy, the strategic projects, and the new ESHEC rebranding strategy were approved by the Council in the extraordinary meeting on 11 August 2023. In the same meeting, the Council approved the revised budget for 2023/2024 to cater for the strategic projects. Implementation and budget for these projects is staggered over the strategy's three (3) year period. The ESHEC strategic projects will be ongoing for three years (2023 to 2026). Therefore, the report only covers information on the progress of projects planned for this financial year and those currently ongoing.



3.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF ESHEC STRATEGIC PROJECTS

3.1.1 RELEVANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC PROJECT	INTENT OF PROJECT	PROGRESS
Optimize ESHEC's operational efficiency.	Core data Management	Having accurate data available to make decisions will ensure that institutions produce qualifications responsive to the country's socio-economic needs.	<p>Research on Skills Gaps and Emerging Skills: In October 2023, the Research Office met with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Central Statistics Office (CSO), and the HRPD Unit. The meetings aimed to propose collaboration with these entities, seek guidance and explore common ground on the skills development and anticipation study.</p> <p>Following these meetings, a formal letter was addressed to the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET). The letter served to report on the study and the importance of collaboration to ensure its success. Subsequently, on October 27th, ESHEC sent a formal letter and a concept paper to the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, seeking collaboration for the study.</p> <p>The Research Unit intends to approach both Ministries for responses and further advice and guidance before the formal launch of the study.</p> <p>ESEPARC/ESHEC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) In November 2023, ESHEC and ESEPARC entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to conduct and advance research in the higher education domain. This agreement's initial focus shall be joint efforts to conduct the Skills Development and Anticipation study. The collaboration between ESHEC and ESEPARC is expected to foster an environment of cooperation and mutual support, leading to accomplishing the study's objectives.</p> <p>As part of this collaborative endeavour, a well-defined work plan for the study has been formulated through a concept paper, which outlines the responsibilities of each party involved (ESHEC and ESEPARC) and facilitates fundraising initiatives.</p> <p>The study is set to begin in January 2024, and both entities shall commence resource mobilization in the same month.</p> <p>BASIC DATA FOR ESHEC ESHEC hired a research intern on November 27th, whose duties involved data mining, analysis, and interpretation. The intern also visited various higher education institutions to gather relevant data, such as the number of private institutions, programs offered, enrollment by gender, senior management, academic staff, student and staff ratio, and graduates over the past two academic years.</p>
	TVET Support	Creating a relevant framework and support for the underserved TVET sector	ESHEC has successfully subscribed to the International Vocational Education and Training Association (IVETA Global). The project leader has also attended a capacity-building workshop on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) policy and training strategy. The Eswatini Qualifications Authority (EQA) is developing guidelines for registering and accrediting TVET service providers and skills centres within the country. EQA will then liaise with ESHEC to ensure these guidelines align with the TVET policy. ESHEC has already drafted an action plan that outlines principles, processes, and tips for transforming TVET project ideas.
	AI Alignment	Explore advances in artificial intelligence to position ESHEC as a future thinking entity.	<p>The project leader attended an AI conference in Tanzania on November 27-30 and is currently compiling the report, which will be presented to the secretariat on 10th January 2023.</p> <p>We are currently conducting a desk review on the current situation and use of Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education.</p> <p>A questionnaire to collect information from HEIs to ascertain the level of AI use will be disseminated in January 2024.</p>
	Rebranding Strategy	Rebrand ESHEC to position it as a value-adding and enabling entity.	In the past quarter, advertising campaigns were launched across various media platforms, including social media and newspapers. On November 22nd, the ESHEC Brand Book was disseminated to all members of the ESHEC staff.

3.1.2 RELATIONSHIP TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC PROJECT	INTENT OF PROJECT	PROGRESS
Strengthen relationships with our stakeholders.	Stakeholder collaboration	Have a feedback system that gives ESHEC accurate annual data on stakeholder perception.	Following the successful ESHEC and Industry Partners' Symposium, we have amassed valuable data revealing our relations with stakeholders are above average. Over 70% of the participants expressed interest in collaborating with the Council in its initiatives. We aim to maintain this momentum by regularly updating our database register, which will remain ongoing. We have included the contact details of possible focal persons for each stakeholder in the register to facilitate communication. A survey monkey was posted on all ESHEC social media platforms to collect feedback on the public's interaction with ESHEC. Report to be analysed.
	Culture Transformation	ESHEC has an inclusive culture of growth and collaboration	The office access system has been installed to regulate the inflow of visitors. However, creating a conducive work environment that fosters employee growth and development and promoting a positive office culture are yet to be initiated. Likewise, team-building exercises have not been undertaken as yet. Training on HR-related matters like performance management, accountability, etc., and team building facilitation are planned for early 2024. The satisfaction Survey is planned for February 2024.

3.1.3 EFFICIENCY OPTIMISATION PROJECT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC PROJECT	INTENT OF PROJECT	PROGRESS
Optimize ESHEC'S operational efficiency	Ensure Automation	ESHEC business is fully automated	In the last quarter, the ESHEC portal was upgraded. This included installing an interface for institutions to upload their data for easy tracking. Index presented to all ESHEC staff and assisted in creating reference/code numbers for their departments. The indexing will assist in the file management system, which will be automated in the coming quarter. ESHEC met with SGG, a company that offers consultancy for Management Systems). Such a system would integrate all ESHEC systems with artificial intelligence (AI) and generate reports.
	Optimise operational construct	Ensure that ESHEC processes, targets, policies, operating procedures, and the organigram are connected intelligently.	ESHEC engaged a vendor to present their understanding of the system to be procured. The vendor found that integrating different processes can be achieved using Artificial Intelligence (AI). A software solution can be installed to integrate the various processes and link them to social media pages to generate a report on public perceptions of ESHEC. To identify the various processes that need to be automated, the team considered the processes listed in the strategy and added HR processes and staff retention issues. Procurement of the system will be done through a tender document. Microsoft Visio training is deemed necessary for mapping processes, and the software will be required. These activities are scheduled to take place in the fourth quarter of 2024.
	Comprehensive PMS system	Ensure that ESHEC has accurate data to understand their human and Org performance.	This project is not yet in progress. Budgeted for the 2024/2025 financial year. Discussions are to be initiated with OrgXpert.

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

4.1. ACTIVITIES

- The Quality Assurance function conducted national institutional and program assessments for various HEIs.
- The function conducted programme reviews to evaluate the ongoing quality maintenance of specific learning programs offered by HEIs.
- The function further facilitated compliance monitoring of registered HEIs through the Compliance Consultants.

4.1.1. INSTITUTIONAL AUDITS AND PROGRAMMES REVIEWS OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Institutional audits were conducted for public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Of these, three are public, and six are private institutions. The assessments were as follows:

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION	INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT	NUMBER OF PROGRAMMES ASSESSED
Institute of Development Management (IDM)		5
University of Eswatini (UNESWA)	Audited	26
Wesco	Audited	3
Emergency And Medical Rescue College (EMRC)	Audited	12
STREEC	Audited	1

Scheduled Assessments and Programme Accreditation in the Last Quarter 2023/2024 are as follows:

INSTITUTION	NUMBER OF PROGRAMMES ASSESSED
Ngwane College	1
William Pitcher College	1
Matsapha Police Academy	1
Springfield Research University	21
Soft-Tech College	6

4.1.2. COMPLIANCE MONITORING FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

During this quarter, the six compliance consultants conducted monitoring visits to scheduled public and private registered HEIs in Eswatini. They also delivered reports to the HEIs after having been reviewed by ESHEC.

Compliance Monitoring for October - November 2023

INSTITUTION	TOWN/CITY
1. Botho University	Manzini
2. SIMVAVSHEQ	Manzini
3. Ngwane Park TVET	Manzini
4. Emmanuel Wesleyan College	Manzini
5. SIMVASHEQ	Siteki
6. CIT	Mbabane

Institutional Visits for Compliance Report Delivery October - December 2023

INSTITUTION	LOCATION
Emergency Medical Rescue College	Mbabane
MUNA Institute	Manzini
Hillside College	Manzini
AMADI	Ngwenya
UTECH TVET College	Big Bend
Bradford College	Manzini
Bethel Vocational Centre	Manzini
Intellectus Campus Eswatini	Matsapha
Eswatini College of Theology	Ezulwini
Resource College	Manzini
Workers College	Manzini

Findings and Recommendations:

• Non-compliance of HEIs and limited implementation of report recommendations

One of the significant challenges faced during this quarter was the non-compliance of certain HEIs. Some institutions have not implemented the necessary measures to address non-compliance issues despite previous assessments and recommendations. This poses a risk to the overall quality of higher education in Eswatini.

Another challenge identified was the relatively low implementation rate of recommendations provided in previous compliance monitoring reports. It is crucial for HEIs to actively implement these recommendations to improve their compliance status and enhance the quality of education provided.

Proposed solutions to address the challenges:

- **Non-compliance with other HEIs**
ESHEC will intensify efforts to engage with non-compliant HEIs, emphasizing the importance of adherence to regulations and compliance benefits. This may include targeted communication campaigns, personalized consultations, and workshops to address specific compliance issues faced by these institutions.
- **Limited implementation of recommendations**
ESHEC will implement a robust monitoring and accountability system to track the implementation of recommendations provided in compliance monitoring reports. This may involve regular follow-up visits, progress reports from HEIs, and establishing mechanisms to support institutions in the implementation process.
- **Strengthening compliance awareness and capacity**
ESHEC will focus on enhancing compliance awareness and capacity among HEIs. This includes organising training sessions, workshops, and seminars to guide and support institutions in establishing effective internal quality assurance structures. Additionally, ESHEC will collaborate with compliance consultants to develop resources and tools that assist HEIs in implementing recommended changes.
- **Continuous improvement of the Compliance Monitoring Framework**
ESHEC will continue to refine and improve the Compliance Monitoring framework in alignment with best practices and evolving higher education standards. Regular consultation and feedback from compliance consultants, HEIs, and relevant stakeholders will be sought to ensure the effectiveness and relevance of the framework.
- **Strengthening collaboration and communication**
ESHEC will enhance collaboration and communication with HEIs, compliance consultants, and other relevant stakeholders. This will foster a culture of cooperation and shared responsibility for compliance, enabling more effective implementation

of recommendations and collectively addressing non-compliance challenges. By implementing these proposed solutions, ESHEC aims to overcome the identified challenges and further enhance the overall compliance of HEIs in Eswatini.

Summary

- Despite the challenges, ESHEC's compliance monitoring function has made significant progress in ensuring the compliance of HEIs in Eswatini. Continued efforts will be made to address non-compliance and promote the implementation of recommended actions.
- Compliance Consultants are now implementing their additional roles as per their terms of reference and contracts. These roles include assisting and monitoring HEIs on their internal quality assurance systems and guiding them on how to write Self-Assessment Reports (SAR).
- From the next final year (April 2024), the ESHEC team and the compliance consultants will be trained on tracer studies and assist HEIs in undertaking these.

4.2 REVIEW OF THE INSTITUTIONAL AND PROGRAMME EVALUATION STANDARDS TO INCLUDE ONLINE LEARNING

Progress Achieved

- During the third quarter of 2023, the consultancy made significant progress towards developing updated guidelines for assessing online institutions and programmes.
- The COL has provided valuable support and expertise in this endeavour.
- The ESHEC team has actively reviewed the twelve existing institutional standards and the ten programme accreditation standards, considering their relevance and adaptability to the online education context.

The October, November and December activities were guided and framed within the six (6) strategic goals of the Research Unit.



5. RESEARCH, MONITORING AND PUBLICATIONS

5.1. STRATEGIC GOAL 3:

Establish processes and programmes to help ESHEC develop research capacity and stimulate research work within institutions of higher education in the country: The ESHEC and Eswatini Educational Research Association (ESWERA) held a collaborative conference between the 6th and 8th of December 2023. The conference focused on the theme of "Transforming Education for the Emerging Context" to foster discussions on innovative approaches to education in the rapidly evolving landscape of the present-day world.

5.2. STRATEGIC GOAL 4:

Enhance sustainability and effectiveness of higher education in Eswatini

5.2.1. HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY BY MOHALE EMMANUEL CONSULTING SERVICES

Following extensive consultation with key stakeholders, including the Eswatini Qualifications Authority (EQA) and DIVT, the consultant submitted the final draft policy on November 28th. On December 19th, a consultant was engaged to conduct a peer review of the Higher Education Policy. This exercise is anticipated to be done by February 9th, after which the ESHEC Council will review the policy before it is presented to Cabinet for approval via the MOET.

5.2.2. REVIEW OF HEI FEE STRUCTURE BY MOHALE EMMANUEL CONSULTING SERVICES

After validation meetings were concluded, the consultant submitted a draft of the final fee structure and now awaits the Cabinet's approval, which will be facilitated by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in January 2024.

5.2.3. SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION BY ESEPARC

The study's data collection process was completed on October 20th, 2023. The collected data was then shared with the research office by ESEPARC on October 25th.

Subsequently, the consultant analysed the findings and produced an abridged report submitted to ESHEC on December 18th. In the same month (January 2024), stakeholders, including the ESHEC Board, will be engaged to validate the proposed model.

5.3. STRATEGIC GOAL 5:

Development of an institutional framework to inform skills development

5.3.1. Skills gap, mismatch, and emerging skills study - Ministry of Labour and Social Security

In October 2023, the Research Office met with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Central Statistics Office (CSO), and the HRPD Unit to propose collaboration with these entities, seek guidance and explore common ground on the skills development and anticipation study. A formal letter was addressed to the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET). The letter served to report on the research and the importance of collaboration to ensure its success. The department is currently engaged in talks for collaboration.

5.4. COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION (CHE) COLLOQUIUM 9TH NOVEMBER, 2023

On the 9th of November, the research manager participated in a colloquium hosted by the Council of Higher Education (CHE) on "Higher Education and the Labour Market".

Study Findings:

The issue of youth unemployment, particularly among rural black communities, is a growing concern in South Africa. Many overqualified individuals are compelled to accept low-paying jobs due to the lack of opportunities in specific fields, especially in the previously classified "priority skills".

The study has revealed that the country's focus on previously designated "priority fields" has led to this significant problem. This is because, for a long time, the emphasis has been on generating a substantial number of graduates in these fields without considering the actual demand. Consequently, these skills and expertise are oversupplied, leading to many unemployed graduates.

Implications of the Study Findings for ESHEC

The study sheds light on the critical need for ESHEC to design a framework for skills anticipation that effectively caters to short-term, medium-term, and long-term objectives. It is also essential that ESHEC leverages the numerical data from the study to accredit programs efficiently. Failure to do so may result in an oversupply of graduates with priority skills, leading to further complications for the country's economy.

ESHEC will attend the Higher Education Conference hosted by CHE from February 28th to March 1st, 2024, at Emperors Palace in Johannesburg. The conference theme is "Deepening the Discourse on Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and Public Accountability in South African Higher Education." This platform will also provide ESHEC with further learning and experience in hosting a conference as a higher education regulator. Also considering that, again, ESHEC has been asked to host a Continental Conference in September 2024 that will be hosting the HAQAA Initiative, funded by the European Union in partnership with the African Union initiative, was established to support the development of a harmonised quality assurance and accreditation system at the institutional level, national, regional and Pan-African continental level.

5.5. BASIC DATA ON HIGHER EDUCATION

5.5.1. CREDIBLE INSTITUTIONS – 45

Private Institutions – 33

Public institutions – 12

All skills centres

Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institution (both public and private) – 10

PROGRAMMES	SENIOR MANAGEMENT	ACADEMIC STAFF	STUDENT ENROLMENT	F	M	STUDENT/STAFF RATIO (TO 1)	GRADUATION RATES (PAST 2 ACADEMIC YEARS)
447	106	1667	23 949	13 148	10 801	14.3	12 106

5.5.2. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

- Eswatini has **45** higher education institutions registered with the Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC). 12 are public institutions, and 33 are privately owned.
- These 45 institutions include all Skills Centres in the country and 10 TVET institutions.
- About **23,949** students are presently enrolled in the 45 institutions, with more female students than males. According to the statistics released by the Examinations Council of Eswatini, females have outperformed males in EGCSE examinations over the years. It therefore stands to reason that the female enrolment rate in higher education institutions would be higher than that of their male counterparts.

- Of these students, **15 298** are enrolled in public institutions, and **8 651** are in privately owned higher education institutions. This reveals a high enrolment rate for public institutions despite being lower in number. This is not unexpected, given that public institutions receive government funding, hence attracting more students.
- The number of students distributed amongst the 33 private institutions suggests that Eswatini could benefit from having fewer privately owned institutions, considering that about 12 of the 33 institutions have student enrolments ranging from 2 to 35 students. One way to achieve this would be to merge institutions that offer the same programmes. Merging these institutions would reduce the number of private institutions and ensure quality education through resource sharing.

ESHEC will continue to disaggregate the data and add more sub-categories to expose hidden trends and inequalities and identify vulnerable groups like students with disabilities and socio-economic issues. In addition,

the data will capture qualification types and the respective institutions offering them, the number of students enrolled in each qualification type, the number of students enrolled in each field of study, the age distribution of students within each qualification type, and completion rates by gender and area of study. The completion rates will then be compared to the present enrolment rates for each respective institution. The disaggregated data will assist in developing programmes and policy decisions by ESHEC and the Ministry of Education and Training.

Observed Challenges

Although the plan was to extract at least 50% of the vital statistics for higher education, it was unfortunate that several institutions still needed to upload their information into the ESHEC integrated system. For those institutions that had uploaded their data, it was discovered that the necessary information had to be updated. Regrettably, this impeded the amount of data that could be collected within the allocated time, hence sticking to a few variables.



6. ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS

6.1. THE INAUGURAL FUNDZELA INDABA

For October 2023, the Advocacy and Communications Office, in a build-up to the Eswatini Fundzela Indaba, had an article in the Eswatini Financial Times and promoted the event in the media and ESHEC social media pages.

In November 2023, the Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC) organised its first symposium to bring together stakeholders from various government ministries, the private sector, industry and professional bodies, and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) offering priority skills. The symposium aimed to discuss ways of addressing current skill discrepancies, bridging skill gaps, and aligning graduates with present and future national and global skill demands. ESHEC sought to foster collaboration and gather support for relevant and high-quality human resource development in the country.

Summary of the Findings

- **Research programs offered by HEIs have a purely academic focus and do not provide practical solutions for the industry or the nation.** Research programs offered by HEIs have a purely academic focus and do not provide practical solutions for the industry or the nation. Higher Education Institutions primarily focus on instilling research skills in students rather than doing research that would help implement evidence-based interventions to benefit both industry and society. This knowledge gap poses a significant threat to the production of knowledge for the nation. A lack of research that seeks to solve real-world problems hampers economic growth, impedes policy formulation, and stifles the country's ability to adapt to change. The situation is further exacerbated by the small number of postgraduate students produced in the country. For instance, the limited number of postgraduate students produced in the country, as seen in the example of the University of Eswatini's 41st graduation ceremony, could be pointing to a

dominant problem with postgraduate studies at the university.

To bridge this gap, ESHEC could encourage the establishment of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) between higher education institutions (HEIs) and relevant industry partners. These agreements could be an invaluable contribution to developing the relevant curriculum, providing students with ample internship opportunities, and involving industry experts in the day-to-day educational practices of the institutions. ESHEC may even consider making such MoUs a requirement for program accreditation.

- **There is no engagement between academia and industry, hence the disconnect and gap between knowledge produced and knowledge required.** The direct communication and engagement between industry and higher education could help direct skills development and be a valuable source of knowledge creation, innovation, and economic growth. Collaboration between higher education and industry to enhance students' practical experience and job readiness could be enabled through offering integrated learning experiences, having industry professionals serve as adjunct lecturers, establishing industry advisory boards, providing internship opportunities, collaborating on joint research projects, and benefiting lecturers' professional development. A beneficial and mutually reinforcing relationship between industry and higher education can be achieved through research initiatives. **To drive this change,** ESHEC can focus on promoting research scholarship within higher education, explicitly motivating HEIs to conduct purpose-oriented research aligned with the objectives of academia and industry. This could also serve as a critical standard for accreditation and quality assurance.

One approach to achieving this is ensuring the educational quality and relevance of both Masters and PhD programs in the country, focusing on identifying and addressing compromising factors

for these degrees, particularly at the University of Eswatini. This could enable equitable access and success before prioritising standards and quality. By doing so, Eswatini may produce more “holistic” post-graduates who obtain degrees and develop innovative solutions.

- **Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and educators are not eager to change.** The negative attitude, resistance, and lack of motivation for both institutions and lecturers to embrace, adopt, implement, and transition to accommodate current and emerging skills demands impact not only their role towards skills development but also the relevancy and employability of their graduates.

To address this problem, ESHEC should encourage institutions to prioritise professional development for their staff. This is because the cultivation of skills within educational spaces depends not solely on the educator's expertise but also on the relevance of that expertise. Every institution's prerogative should be to incapacitate and empower its educators to adapt and evolve with change. This could be achieved through providing lifelong learning opportunities for all educators.

IMMEDIATE ACTION PLAN FOR ESHEC

ESHEC intends to expand its interactions with various industries and act as a conduit between higher education and the labour market. The objective is to ensure that the skills developed in higher education align with the diverse requirements of industries. To achieve this, ESHEC will facilitate a forum where industry and professional bodies can directly communicate with higher education institutions (HEIs). Furthermore, ESHEC aims to pursue the signing of a Memorandum

of Understanding (MOU) with the Construction Industry Council (CIC) to lay a foundation for productive industry engagement. Additionally, ESHEC will explore ways to enable HEIs to integrate soft skills into their curriculum.

6.2. PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS ON ESHEC

The ESHEC Awareness Radio Jingles airing on EBIS 1 SiSwati Channel commenced on 6 October 2023 and will end on 12 December 2023. The jingles, which play before the morning and evening news bulletin, will air until mid-December.

6.3. ESHEC SECOND QUARTER NEWSLETTER

For November 2023, the Advocacy and Communications Office produced the 3rd Volume of the ESHEC Newsletter. The Newsletter has been disseminated to all stakeholders, including HEIs. Hard copies, including international participants, will be distributed during the ESHEC/SERA Conference.

6.4. ADVOCACY AND INFORMATION SHARING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

For the 3rd quarter, the ESHEC Facebook page had a post reach of 11347, an engagement of 2502, and 845 and 515 likes. ESHEC LinkedIn presently has 124 connections and 450 followers. It grew to 26 followers in January 2024. X, formerly known as Twitter, is the least followed with 17 followers.

The FB engagement for the 3rd quarter was 2502. The graph below shows the top cities which engaged most with ESHEC on the FB page. It reveals the information gap about ESHEC, particularly in rural towns like Siteki, Piggs Peak, Big Bend, Siteki and Malkerns. Information about ESHEC should reach these towns as well. To address this, prime-time radio jingles have been aired on the national radio station, Eswatini Broadcasting and Information Services.



7. IT SERVICES

7.1. STRATEGIC MILESTONE

- The automation of Eswatini Higher Education Council is digitising the core business processes for ESHEC by introducing an online system.
- ESHEC business processes, which have the registration module that includes establishment, registration of institutions and accreditation of programmes, are at 90% completion.

7.2. MAINTENANCE OF ESHEC SYSTEM (PORTAL)

- This is a regular exercise done every day by the IT officer. Maintaining the system means making sure that the system is up and running via our website. This ensures that HEIs can upload their data. This function further enables ESHEC to check the institution's upload status, encouraging institutions to finish uploading accurate data and ensuring that the QA function assists institutions in uploading their data. Finally, this function stores and protects ESHEC data.

7.3. ESHEC SYSTEM UPGRADE AND TRAINING

- The consultancy (Mawema) trained ESHEC staff on the system, which was updated with new features.

- ESHEC Officers can view the institution's dashboard the way it appears on the institution's side. These new features will make it easier to assist institutions when they are stuck. It also allows easy progress checks on institutions due to the ability to navigate an institution's dashboard step by step. The system password reset function was added in the future so that institutions can reset their passwords without the help of ESHEC officers.

7.4. PRESENTATION BY CCG SYSTEMS DEVELOPERS

- SGG is a company that offers consultancy (Systems developers). As part of the strategic project of optimising ESHEC's operational construct and ensuring that ESHEC processes, targets, policies, operating procedures, and the organogram are connected intelligently, CCG was invited by ESHEC to present what they could offer to ESHEC.
- Some of the services under this strategic project are to upgrade and integrate the current system with other systems with the help of Artificial intelligence (AI). This means that the AI would be at the centre of all processes and be able to interpret all processes and generate reports for ESHEC.



8. MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE REPORTING PERIOD

- The review/development of the higher education framework.
- Quality Assurance function's efforts in regulating and evaluating HEIs in Eswatini and catching up with the backlog of institutional assessments for public and private higher education institutions.
- Through conducting institutional and program assessments, monitoring compliance, and harmonising quality assurance standards, ESHEC has fostered better coordination.
- ESHEC is developing guidelines to operationalize the Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy and is currently setting up the reporting lines.
- ESHEC has received financial and technical support from the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) to review the institutional and programme standards

and integrate standards for online institutions and programmes. According to the agreement signed by both parties, COL will fund expenditures for workshops and stakeholder engagements for this exercise to the amount of Sixty-Eight Thousand and Five Hundred Emalangenani (E68, 500), which will be paid directly to ESHEC in two trenches. COL will fund the amount of about One Hundred and Sixty-Eight Thousand Emalangenani (E168,000), which will be paid directly to the consultant Dr Ephraim Mhlanga for remuneration, flights and accommodation to facilitate stakeholder engagements in Eswatini. COL has made a separate contract directly with the consultant.



9. MAJOR CHALLENGES OF THE REPORTING PERIOD AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Additional financial and human resources for quality assurance:**

This affects ESHEC's ability to meet increasing demands for quality assurance of HEIs. There needs to be increased resource allocation to the quality assurance work.

- **Additional APDC and Council Meetings for the backlog:** From January 2023, the secretariat will submit to Council reports for institutional and programme assessments from October 2023 and scheduled for up to May 2024. ESHEC requested an additional four (4) special meetings for the APDC and Council between January and May 2024

to review all institutional and programme assessment reports to be submitted by the secretariat. This is in addition to the Statutory Board Meetings of January 2024 and April 2024.

- **Programme Evaluation Fees:**

There are challenges with UNESWA that must be addressed before ESHEC can continue with their assessment. To address these, the ESHEC CEO and Finance and Administration Manager will have another meeting with the UNESWA management, especially the finance team. SANU also face similar challenges but has committed to writing to start paying their fees in April 2024. Nothing is forthcoming from UNESWA.



APPENDIX 2

BASIC DATA FOR ESHEC

NAME OF INSTITUTION	INSTITUTIONAL TYPE	QUALIFICATION TYPES	PROGRAMMES	SENIOR MANAGEMENT	ACADEMIC STAFF	STUDENTS ENROLMENT	FEMALES	MALES	STUDENT STAFF RATIO (TO 1)
Institute for Development Management (IDM)	PUBLIC	Certificates, Diplomas, Bachelors and Masters	7	7	75	543	344	199	7.2
Matsapha Police Academy	PUBLIC	Diplomas	1	3	132	257	93	164	1.9
University of Eswatini (UNESWA)	PUBLIC	Certificate, Diploma, Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral	84	9	487	7948	4299	3649	16.3
Southern African Nazarene University (SANU)	PUBLIC	Certificate, Bachelors, Masters	18	4	168	1323	934	389	7.9
Eswatini Medical Christian University	PUBLIC	Degree	7	5	46	1136	715	421	24.7
William Pitcher Teacher Training College	PUBLIC	Diplomas	1	3	40	436	227	209	10.9
Ngwane Teacher Training College	PUBLIC	Diplomas	1	1	48	579	377	202	12.1
Eswatini College of Technology (ECOT)	PUBLIC	Diplomas	18	1	57	1049	395	654	18.4
Eswatini Institute of Management and Public Administration (EIMPA)	PUBLIC	Professional Courses	46	2	14	1800	1080	720	128.6
Gwamile Voctim	PUBLIC	Diplomas	8	2	75	182	110	72	2.4
Mpisi Farm	PUBLIC	TVET Certificate	1	1	4	25	8	17	6.3
ECODEC Ezulwini	PUBLIC	TVET Certificate	2	1	8	20	14	6	2.5
Bosco Youth Agricultural Centre									
	PRIVATE	TVET Certificate	4	0	10	144	9	135	14.4
BSA Training Centre	PRIVATE	TVET Certificate	5	2	6	408	134	274	68.0
Bethel Vocational Centre	PRIVATE	TVET Certificate	3	1	5	60	14	46	12.0
Advanced School of Information Technology	PRIVATE	Advanced Diploma	5	2	14	280	84	196	20.0
Emergency Medical Rescue College	PRIVATE	Certificates, Diploma, Bachelor	10	2	25	352	210	142	14.1
Institute of Research, Management and Development (IRDM)	PRIVATE	Diploma	9	1	17	191	146	45	11.2
SOFTECH Swaziland	PRIVATE	Certificates	11	6	4	51	32	19	12.8
Regent Business School	PRIVATE	Certificate, degree, Masters	11	4	30	325	204	121	10.8
Centre for International Technology Consultancy (CIT)	PRIVATE	Diplomas	19	1	30	250	232	18	8.3
AMADI University College	PRIVATE	Bachelors, Master's Degree	12	8	31	138	110	28	4.5
Workers College	PRIVATE	Diplomas, Bachelors	16	2	10	242	200	42	24.2
Birch Cooper Graduate Institution	PRIVATE	Diplomas, Certificates	9	3	18	84	68	16	4.7
Global University College	PRIVATE	Diplomas, Certificates	10	1	12	121	96	25	10.1
CITEC University	PRIVATE	Diploma	17	2	3	41	31	10	13.7
Ngwane Park TVET	PRIVATE	TVET Certificate	3	1	18	125	101	24	6.9
Providence International Training Institute	PRIVATE	Diploma	20	1	8	35	7	28	4.4
Hillside College	PRIVATE	TVET Certificate	7	1	7	125	45	80	17.9
Bradford College	PRIVATE	Certificate, Diploma and Advanced Diploma	9	5	32	123	67	56	3.8
NOSA	PRIVATE	Short Courses	1	2	7	1180	543	637	168.6
Resource College	PRIVATE	TVET Certificate	3	1	4	32	20	12	8.0
MUNA Health Life Institute	PRIVATE	Certificates	4	4	10	2	2	0	0.2
Ubombo Technical College (U-Tech)	PRIVATE	Diploma	9	1	10	423	99	324	42.3

NAME OF INSTITUTION	INSTITUTIONAL TYPE	QUALIFICATION TYPES	PROGRAMMES	SENIOR MANAGEMENT	ACADEMIC STAFF	STUDENTS ENROLMENT	FEMALES	MALES	STUDENT STAFF RATIO (TO 1)
Botho University	PRIVATE	Bachelor's Degree	8	1	7	101	59	42	14.4
Limkokwing University of Creative Technology (LUCT)	PRIVATE	Associate Degree	14	3	86	2852	1414	1438	33.2
African Christian College	PRIVATE	Bachelor's Degree	1	1	7	16	4	12	2.3
African Prime Institute for Science and Technology	PRIVATE	Diploma	4	1	8	29	19	10	3.6
Intellectus Campus	PRIVATE	Certificates	7	1	5	27	24	3	5.4
Eastern and Southern African Management Institute	PRIVATE	Masters, VET Certificates	7	1	20	19	10	9	0.1
Sicobho Skills Centre	PRIVATE	TVET Certificate	1	1	2	4	0	4	2.0
St John Eswatini	PRIVATE	Certificate	5	2	3	4	0	4	1.3
Good Shepherd College of Nursing	PRIVATE	Diploma	2	2	15	325	216	109	21.7
Emmanuel Wesleyan Bible College	PRIVATE	Certificate and Diploma	2	2	9	5	2	3	0.6
TOTALS			447	106	1667	23412	12798	10801	14.3



1. CREDIBLE INSTITUTIONS – 45

1.1. PRIVATE – 32

1.2. PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS – 12

1.3. ALL SKILLS CENTRES

1.3.1. TVET (both public and private) – 10

2. BASIC ANALYSIS OF DATA

2.1. The table above represents a comprehensive report summarising the essential statistics on Higher Education in Eswatini. The report classifies the educational institutions in the country into public and private institutions, with private institutions being dominant in numbers. However, the report reveals that public institutions have a higher enrolment rate than private institutions. This is not unexpected, given that public institutions receive funding from the government. Furthermore, the report notes that public institutions have a higher proportion of academic staff than private institutions, despite the latter having more institutions. This indicates that educators in private institutions may be overburdened, or some programs may have inadequately qualified teachers, leading to one lecturer teaching several courses outside

their area of expertise. The report also highlights that the enrolment rates surpass the graduation rates in public and private institutions. This trend suggests that students face challenges while pursuing their studies and fail to complete their programs.

2.2. It is also noteworthy that a considerable proportion of the female populace is enrolled in higher education institutions. In light of the recently released statistics by the Examinations Council of Eswatini for the 2021 IGCSE results, it is evident that females outperformed males. Therefore, it stands to reason that the female enrolment rate in higher education institutions will be higher than that of their male counterparts.

3. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

1. Bahamas Academy and Mananga Institute seized operations.
2. Information on Springfield Research University is not available
3. Information on Skills' Centres is also not available

CREDIBLE INSTITUTIONS IN ESWATINI

ACRONYMS AND NAMES

ESHEC	Eswatini Higher Education Council
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
ESQF	Eswatini Qualifications Framework

INTRODUCTION

The Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC) was established in 2015 in terms of the Higher Education Act of 2013 to regulate Higher Education provision in the country. Its mandate is to develop and implement a quality assurance system for higher education, covering among other areas, registration, accreditation, institutional audits, quality promotion and setting of standards. The Higher Education Act defines higher education as all learning programmes commenced after secondary education and leading to a higher qualification. For an institution to operate and be recognised in Eswatini, it must be registered in terms of the Higher Education Act, 2013.

REGISTRATION OF H.E. PROVIDERS

In order to be registered, institutions should meet standards as set out in the Higher Education (General) Regulations of 2016, published in Legal Notice 14 of 2016.

An institution is said to be recognised if granted approval under one of the following categories:

1. Provisional Authority to Establish and Operate

In accordance with section 19 of the Higher Education Act of 2013, a new and establishing institution may be granted provisional authority to establish and operate for a period not exceeding two years.

2. Full Registration

In terms of Part IV of the Higher Education Act of 2013, an institution which has met the quality standards to the satisfaction of the Council may be given full registration.

3. Accreditation

Institutional accreditation is granted in line with Part V of the Higher Education Act. It may be granted to an institution that has operated for over five years under the full registration certificate and has proven beyond doubt that all its structures and operations are effective. The institution should also have proven that it is internally and externally efficient. The following is a list of the of credible institutions and accredited programmes:

A. List of Institutions granted authority to establish and operate

Name of Institution	Accepted Programmes	Discontinued Programmes
Advanced School of Information Technology (RSTP)	Diploma in Certified Computer Professional (ACCP) Diploma in Arena Animation International Programme (AAIP) Diploma in Certified Network Specialist (ACNS) Diploma in Information Security and Ethical Hacking (ISEH)	
BOSCO Youth Agricultural Centre (BYAC)	Certificate in Permaculture Certificate in Horticulture Certificate in Bee Keeping Certificate in Pig Production	

Name of Institution	Accepted Programmes	Discontinued Programmes
Emergency Medical Rescue College	Diploma in Emergency Rescue Certificate in Emergency Medical and Rescue Certificate in Basic Ambulance Assistant Short Courses Basic Life Support for Health Care Providers Advanced Cardiac Life Support Light Motor Vehicle Rescue High Angle Rescue 1 High Angle Rescue 2 Confined Space and Rescue First Aid	
Institute of Research Management and Development (IRDM)	Security Management Counselling Training Customer Service Certification Basic Computer Training	Cyber Crime Security Occupational Health and Safety
BSA Training Centre (Ngwenya)	Certificate in Heavy Motor Vehicle Certificate in Light Motor Vehicle Certificate in Health and Safety Certificate in Electrical Engineering Certificate in Plumbing	
Soft Tech Swaziland	Certificate in Database Certificate in Server Certificate in Office Management Certificate in Project Management Certificate in CISCO Certificate Network Associate Certificate in CISCO Certificate Network Professional Certificate in Certified Ethical Hacking Certificate in storage essentials Certificate in Google Apps Certificate in Android	
Regent Business School	Master of Business Administration Postgraduate Diploma in Management Bachelor of Commerce Bachelor of Commerce Honours Bachelor of Commerce in Supply Chain Management Bachelor of Commerce-Human Resource Management Higher Certificate in Business Management	
Centre for International Technology and Consultancy (CIT)	Primary Teacher's Diploma Certificate in CAT Diploma in CAT Advanced Diploma in CAT Diploma in Information Technology	All Bachelors Programmes
AMADI University College	Primary Teachers Diploma Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) Bachelor of Education (Foundation) Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) ACCA	All Programmes at Masters Level
Workers College	Primary Teachers Diploma Secondary Teachers Diploma Early Childhood Teachers Diploma ACCA Bachelor of Commerce	All programmes at Masters Level
Birch Cooper Graduate Institute		All programmes at Masters Level All programmes at Bachelor's Level Primary Teacher's Diploma
Global University College	Primary Teachers Diploma	Post Graduate Diploma in Education Secondary Teachers Diploma All programmes at Masters Level All programmes at Bachelor's Level

Name of Institution	Accepted Programmes	Discontinued Programmes
CITEC College	Primary Teachers Diploma ACCA Certificate in Accounting Technician (CAT)	All Bachelors Programmes All programmes at Masters Level
Ngwane Park TVET	Diploma in Fashion Design	
Providence International Training Institute		
Hillside College	Electrical Engineering Mechanical Engineering Civil Engineering Chemical Engineering Water and Waste Management Computer Engineering Human Resources Management HIV/AIDS Management	
Bradford College	Primary Teachers Diploma Secondary Teachers Diploma (STD)	All Bachelors programmes
Swaziland College of Theology	Bachelor of Theology Bachelors in Psychology Diploma in Theology Diploma in Counselling	
Resource College	Electrical Engineering Mechanical Engineering Civil Engineering	
Muna Health life Institute	Certificate in Health Life Management Sciences Human Wellness Promotion Human Health and Disease Prevention Human Capacity Development	
St John Eswatini	Sort courses: Save a life First Aid level 1 First Aid Level 2 & 3 Home- Based Care Health and Safety	
Ubombo Technical College (U-Tech College)	Electrical Engineering Mechanical Engineering Civil Engineering Water and Waste Water Engineering Industrial Electronics Financial Management Marketing Management Business Management Human Resource Management	
Eswatini Christian Medical University	Bachelor of Radiography Bachelor of Nursing Science Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science Bachelor of Psychology Bachelor of Social Work Bachelor of Pharmacy Bachelor of Computer Science	
Limkokwing University of Creative Technology (LUTC)	Associate Degree in Graphic Design Associate Degree in Creative Multimedia Associate Degree in Architectural Design Associate Degree in Public Relations Associate Degree in Events Management Associate Degree in Film and Television Production Associate Degree in Information Technology Associate Degree in Business Information Technology Associate Degree in Hotel Management Associate Degree in Business Management Bachelor of Science in Information Technology Bachelor of Arts in Professional Design Bachelor of Arts in Professional Communication Bachelor of Arts in International Business	
African Prime Institute for Science and Technology (APIST)	Diploma in Health Records and Information Technology Diploma in Agriculture and Community Development Certificate in Electronics and Telecommunications Engineering Certificate in Architectural Technology	

Name of Institution	Accepted Programmes	Discontinued Programmes
Intellectus Campus	Pharmaceutical Sales Representative Certificate Smart Sales Representative Certificate Medical and Dental (Health Care) Receptionist Certificate Microsoft Digital Literacy Certificate, Microsoft Excel Word and PowerPoint Certificate Understanding HIV- Voluntary Testing and Counselling, Understanding ARVs Certificate	
Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI)	Master of Business Administration Master in Human Resources Management Master of Science in Project Management Bachelor of Business Administration Diploma in Management and Administration Diploma in Human Resources Diploma in Management	
Springfield Research University	Bachelor of Science in Forestry Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Governance Bachelor of Arts in Psychology Bachelor of Business Administration in Supply Chain Management and Logistics.	
Bethel Vocational Centre	Certificate in Construction and Building Certificate in Welding Design Certificate in Electrical Engineering	
Sicobho Skills Centre	Certificate in Carpentry and Welding	

B. List of Institutions granted full registration

Name of Institution	Accepted Programmes	Discontinued Programmes
African Christian College	Bachelor of Theology	
Botho University	Bachelor of Science in Network Security and Computer Forensics Bachelor of Science in Computing Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting Bachelor of Business Administration in Business Management Bachelor of Science Mobile Computing Bachelor of Science in Health Information Management ACCA (Association of Certified Chartered Accountants) CIMA (Chartered Institute of Management Accountant)	
Mananga Centre for Regional Integration and Management Development	Diploma in Human Resources Management Diploma in Marketing Diploma in Community Development Diploma in Computer Engineering Diploma in Financial Accounting Diploma in Public Sector Accounting Diploma in Office Administration Diploma in Entrepreneurship Diploma in Office Administration Certificate in Project Management Supervisors Development Programme Certificate in Human Resources Certificate in Project Management Master of Business Administration (<i>Mananga only serves as a Centre for the Edinburg Business School</i>)	All other programmes at Masters Level All programmes at Bachelor's Level
Good Shepherd College of Nursing	Diploma in General Nursing Certificate in Nursing Assistant Post Graduate Certificate in Midwifery Diploma in Health and Safety	
Emmanuel Wesleyan Bible College	Certificate in Christian Service Diploma in Counselling	
NOSA ESWATINI	Occupational Health and Safety programmes	
SIMAVSHEQ	Occupational Health and Safety programmes	

B. List of Institutions granted full registration

Name of Institution	Accepted Programmes
Institute for Development Management (IDM)	Master of Business Administration (Offered in collaboration with the University of Namibia) Bachelor of Arts in Human Resources Management Diploma in Human Resources Management Certificate in Human Resources Management Diploma in Information Technology Diploma in Accounting and Business Studies Certificate in Freight Forwarding and Customs Compliance
Matsapha Police Academy	Basic Recruit Certificate Course

3. University of Eswatini (UNESWA)
4. Southern African Nazarene University (SANU)
5. Eswatini College of Technology (ECOT)
6. Eswatini Medical Christian University
7. William Pitcher Teacher Training College
8. Ngwane Teacher Training College
9. Gwamile VCTIM
10. MpisiFarm
11. SkillsCentres
12. ECODECEzulwini
13. EIMPA(EswatiniInstituteofManagementandPublicAdministration)

D. List of Institutions where the Primary Teacher's Diploma Programme was suspended

1. Birch Cooper Graduate Institute (Discontinued)
2. Corporate Development and Training Centre (Discontinued)





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