



# TRACK & TRACER STUDIES 2014/15 - 2019/20 Synthesis Report

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The views expressed in this report are that of the Author and not that of the HWSETA.

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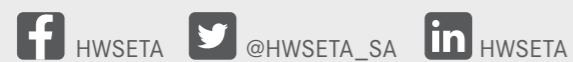
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# TRACK AND TRACER STUDIES 2014/15 - 2019/20 SYNTHESIS REPORT

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Figure 1: Abbreviation

Annual Performance Plan	APP
Health and Welfare Sector Education Training Authority	HWSETA
Further Education and Training Certificate	FETC
National Qualification Framework	NQF
National Skills Development Strategy	NSDS III
Unemployment Insurance Fund	UIF
Sector Education and Training Authority	SETA
Skills Development Act	SDA
South Africa	SA
Statistics South Africa	STATS-SA
Work-Based Learning	WBL

# Glossary

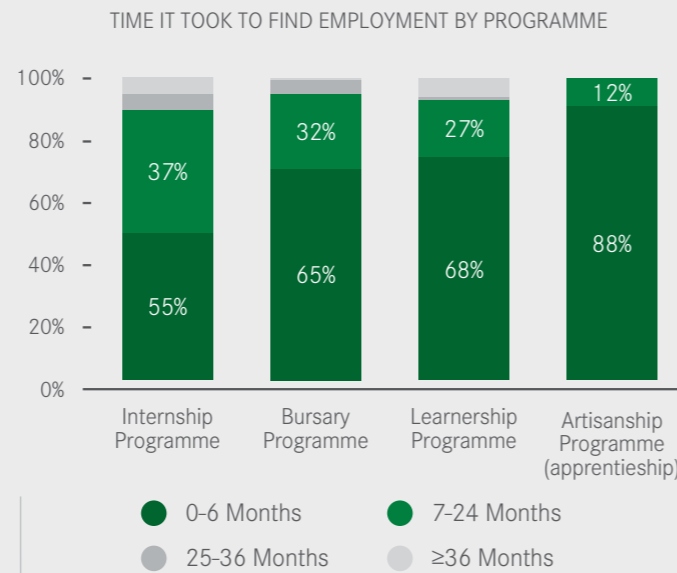
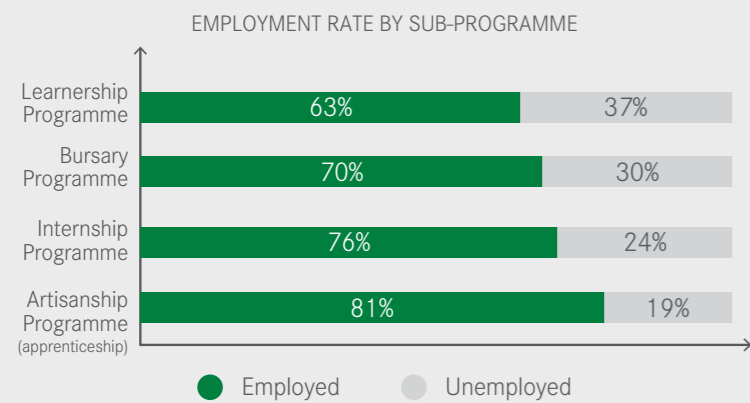
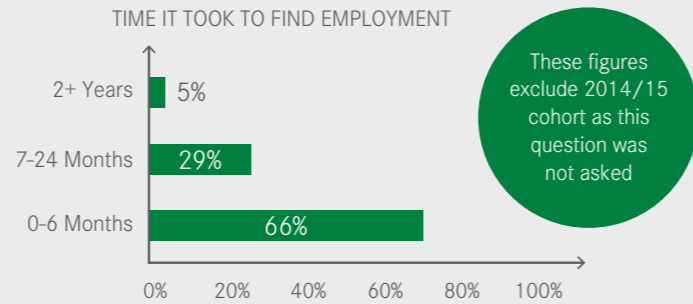
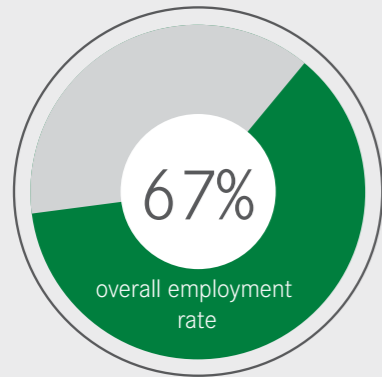
Figure 2: Glossary

Beneficiary:	Refers to an individual who completed a work-based learning programme (in this case, it could be an artisanship, bursary, internship or learnership programme).
Employment status:	A terminology used in the report to capture the destinations of learners who completed the HWSETA sub-programme during the 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial periods and refers to any type of activity as categorised in the survey questionnaire about what they were doing after completion of their respective sub-programme.
Population size:	The total number of the learning programme participants.
Respondent:	Refers to a participant who completed the survey.
Sampling frame:	The total number of learning programme participants with contactable details.
Sample size:	The predetermined total number of participants drawn from the population size to conduct the survey questionnaire.
Follow-up population:	All those who completed the track and tracer study from the 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial year periods and indicated that they were unemployed.

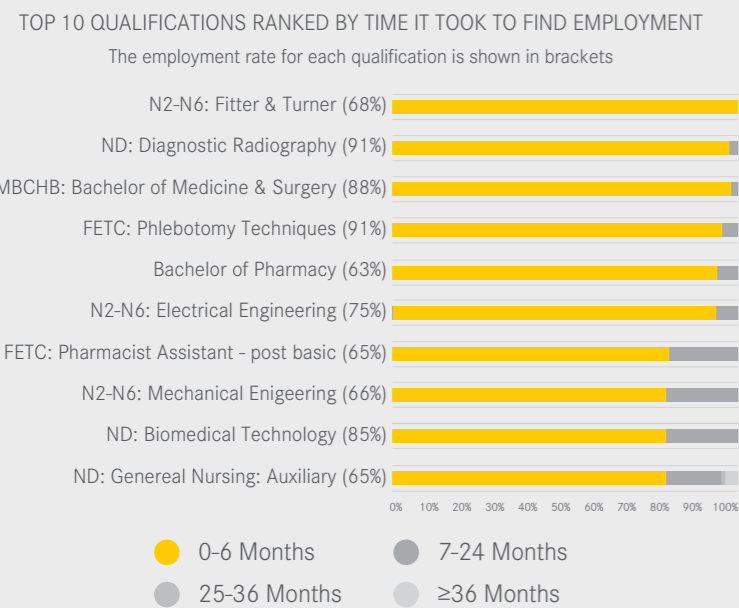
# HWSETA TRACK AND TRACER STUDIES

## Trend Analysis 2014/15 - 2019/20

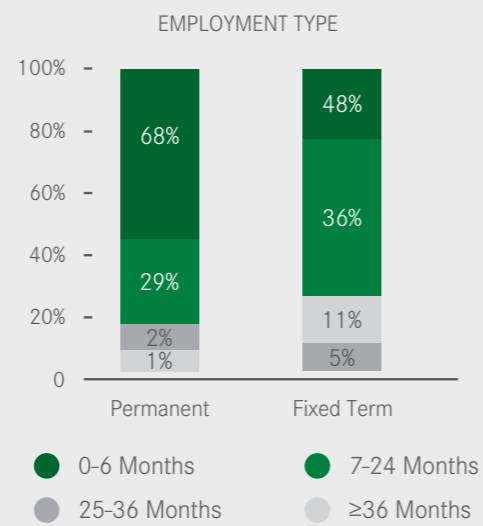
### OVERALL EMPLOYMENT



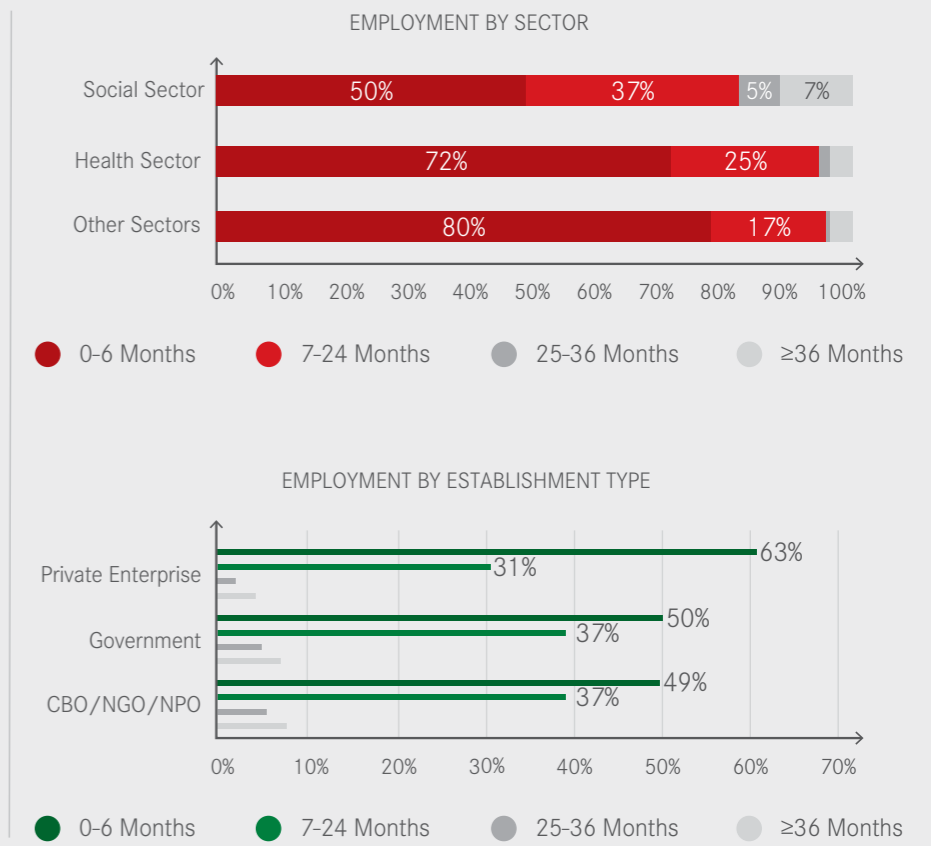
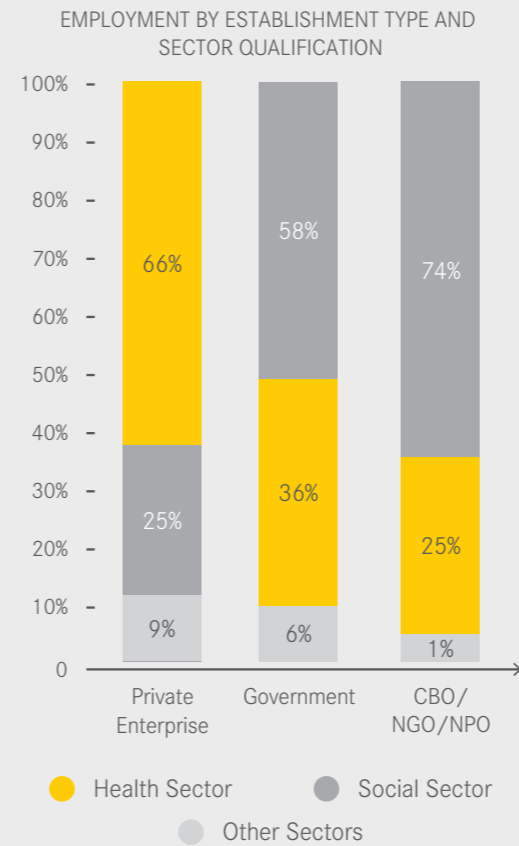
### ABSORPTION RATE BY QUALIFICATION



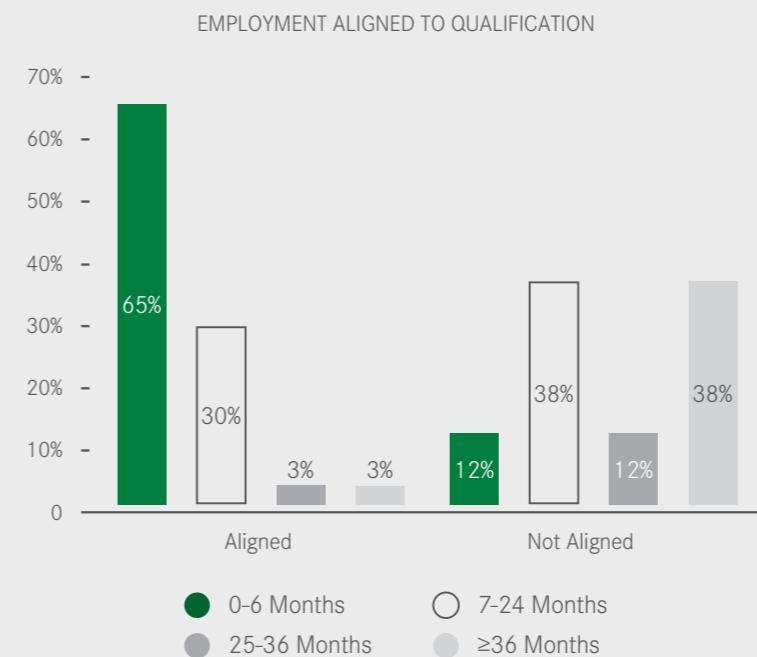
### EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS



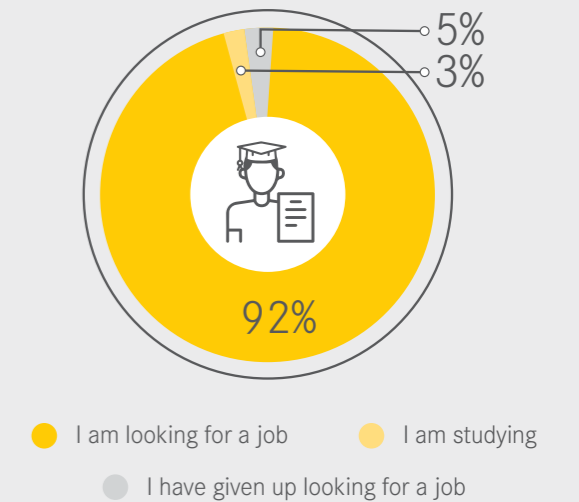
### EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS



### ALIGNMENT OF QUALIFICATION TO EMPLOYMENT



### ACTIVITY OF UNEMPLOYED LEARNERS





# 01.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

This synthesis report used trend analysis to determine trends and patterns that shape HWSETA learning programmes. The annual track and trace studies allow for a cross-sectional analysis that can only provide a snapshot of employment rates at a particular point in time. However, in this trend analysis, data from each tracer study has been combined so that we could account for a period of time beyond one year.

The report focuses on the unemployed learners who successfully completed HWSETA's learning programmes from 2014/15 to 2019/20, namely, artisanship, bursary, internship, and learnership. Therefore, this report provides a six-year overview of the outcomes of the HWSETA work-based learning programmes.

An outcome of a tracer study is the determination of whether a type of programme is achieving its aims and objectives through a demonstration of its results. As such, this is critical as it is aligned to SETA's mandate to strengthen the Post School Education and Training (PSET) sector to prepare young people for the labour market and contribute towards skills development.

As a result, the HWSETA plays an essential role in addressing the issue of high youth unemployment and skills development. It is essential to evaluate and track and trace learners to ensure that these programmes produce positive outcomes, as well as an inquiry into their employment pathways upon completion of the skills development interventions funded by HWSETA.

The aim of the analysis is therefore to provide employment trends and patterns that will shape the future of the HWSETA learning programmes, which will be achieved by pursuing the following objectives:

- To determine the overall employment rate over a six-year period.
- To determine the qualifications that yield high absorption rates by the labour market.

- To determine the qualifications that yield better employment prospects.
- To determine if the employment secured is aligned to their qualification.
- To assess unemployed learners' activity.

## RESULTS

This section provides a discussion of findings that reflect on the overall analysis of previous track and tracer studies to determine trends and patterns in outcomes of HWSETA learning programmes during the six-year period. This section begins with the overall employment rate, followed by a discussion about employment disaggregated by gender, race, age and the learners' residing province. It also reviews the time taken to acquire employment, the quality of employment and lastly the learners' perspectives about their respective learning programmes.

## EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF LEARNERS

Employment was defined as the number of learners who reported employment and receiving some type of remuneration on a regular basis. The analysis demonstrated that 62% of learners who participated in the study over the past six years have found employment, while 38% could not find employment.

Furthermore, after tracing learners who have previously reported that they were unemployed, the HWSETA conducted a follow-up study to assess their employment status. Another 486/978 were employed after six months of completion, totaling 2862/4252 (67%) employed after graduation. Additionally, the results revealed that employment fluctuated over the years, but stabilised in the last two years at 60%.

Demographically, women were more likely to find employment than men; Black learners were most likely to find employment (96%) than those from other racial groups.

Furthermore, most of the learners employed were of young age (80%) and lived in Gauteng (41%), Limpopo (19%), KwaZulu-Natal (10%), and Eastern Cape (10%). The Northern Cape had the lowest proportion of learners who found employment, at 1%.

The study noted that employment rates varied by learning programme. The employment rate for apprenticeship (artisan) and internship programmes is generally higher, at 81% and 76% respectively, than the employment rate for bursaries (70%) and learnerships (63%).

However, over the years, the learnership programme has consistently had a higher percentage share of the overall employment, contributing 63% on average, followed by the internship programme at 20%. On the other hand, bursaries and artisans held a lower share of total employment, with 12% and 5% respectively.

Overall, learners who were employed are more likely to come from the learnership and internship programmes than from the artisan or bursary programmes due to the shorter turnaround time for programme completions. Internships and learnerships usually take 1-2 years to complete, whereas the bursary programmes can take up to seven years. Due to the limited number of learners enrolled in the programme, the artisan contributes significantly less to overall employment.

## AVERAGE TIME TAKEN BY LEARNERS TO FIND EMPLOYMENT

HWSETA has set a six-month target for learners to find employment upon completion of their learning programmes. In addition, the six-month period serves as a proxy indicator for job market demand. In the past six years, 66% of the learners reported found employment within six months of completing the programme, while 29% found employment between seven and 24 months after completing the programme. A small number of learners found employment between 2 and 3 years after completion, and 2% found employment beyond 3 years. However, this includes only 69% (1622/2367) of the learners who responded to the survey, as the 2014/15 tracer study (the first HWSETA track and tracer study) did not include this question.

When looking at the programmes that tend to yield employment within six months of completing the programme, the data showed that over three quarters of learners in the artisan programme are likely to find employment within six months of completing the programme. In addition, learners enrolled in internship and bursary programmes tend to take longer to secure employment, with between 45% and 35% of these learners finding employment after 7 months of completion, respectively.

Taking a closer look at qualifications, health and artisan qualifications usually yield employment within six months of completion, while social sector qualifications typically yield employment later on. Among the top five qualifications that were able to produce employment within six months are: N2-N6 Fitter and Turner, ND: Diagnostic Radiography, Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery FETC: Phlebotomy Techniques, and Bachelor of Pharmacy. Except for FETC: Phlebotomy at 202, all top 5 qualifications had a small frequency ranging from 20 to 35 but yielded an employment rate greater than 90% within six months. In contrast, the Social Auxiliary Work, Child and Youth Care Work and the Social Work degrees had higher numbers of learners who acquired employment; however, they took longer to obtain employment, with 33% to 41% obtaining employment after six months of completion.

## NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT PROVIDED FOR HWSETA-FUNDED LEARNERS

Learners in the artisan and health sectors are more likely to be absorbed within six months of completing their learning programmes, while those in the social sector are more likely to be absorbed after six months. For example, N2-N6 Fitter and Turner and ND: Diagnostic Radiology yield employment after six months of completion, whereas Social Auxiliary work and BA: Social Work yield employment after six months of completion.

Furthermore, about 60% of the learners work in the private sector, followed by government and NPOs. Private sector

employers tend to employ more learners within the first six months, whereas government and NPOs employ more after six months. The trend can be explained by the lack of funds available or late approval of budgets in these two sectors.

Additionally, 66% of learners are employed early after completing their programmes, and a majority are employed on a permanent basis. Conversely, learners employed on fixed-term basis take longer to find a job (52%), with only 48% finding a job within six months of completing their programme.

Both male and female learners were equally likely to hold a permanent or a temporary job. Female learners with health or social sectors qualifications make up the majority of those employed on a fixed-term basis, while male learners are more likely to hold artisan qualifications.

Approximately two-thirds of the learners who found jobs within six months said that their jobs matched their qualifications, but learners who took longer to find jobs said their jobs did not match their qualifications. Furthermore, 60% of the learners were absorbed by the same employer that trained them. Most learners found jobs that paid relatively well, with 45% earning a monthly salary between R12 801 and R25 600.

Learners in the health sector are most likely to receive contributions from their employers toward their UIF, pension funds, and medical aid, followed by learners in the artisan and social sectors. Employers contributed the least to medical aid across all sectors.

The analysis demonstrated that the NQF levels 2 and 6 tend to yield higher employment rates while the NQF level 1 has the lowest, and Further, NQF levels 5,8,10 and N2-N6 yield 80% employment rate each.

In addition, more than a third of learners reported being unemployed; 92% of them are still seeking employment, 5% have given up looking for work, and 3% are studying.



### LEARNERS' PERCEPTION OF THE PROGRAMME

Other than learners finding employment it is also critical to determine the usefulness of the HWSETA interventions. Overall, most of the learners are satisfied with the programme and have found them useful. However, they have raised concern that it is costly to find a job as many use the internet to find employment, and further indicated that there were limited advertised posts aligned to their qualification which indicates a certain level of misaligned

market and labour distribution. Learners cited limited opportunities and insufficient capacity to accommodate all learners as reasons for not finding employment.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall employment rate for the past six years is 67%. The type of qualification is an important contributing factor towards employment. Overall, qualifications in high demand yield a faster rate of employment

since learners are absorbed quickly into the job market. The sector of employment also influences employment. A higher employment rate is found in the health and other (artisan) sectors. In addition to qualifications, the level of skills also plays an important role in employment rates, with higher qualifications yielding faster employment rates. In most cases, learners who find employment quickly are employed in positions that are aligned to their qualifications. It was also found that establishment type plays a role in

employment: the private sector employs most learners soon after completion, whereas the government and NPO sectors employ learners after six months.

To conclude, employment is determined by the labour market demand, which, in turn, is determined by the type of qualification, the sector qualification, the level of skills, and further by establishment type.

It is evident that learners are securing employment in their fields of study. Thus, it is important to acknowledge the efforts that have been made to determine the progress made so far. Similarly, it is recommended that the HWSETA

track and trace studies continue to monitor the learning programmes for the purpose of determining the outcomes of the HWSETA interventions.



## 02. BACKGROUND

This report details the findings from the previous track and tracer studies which reports outcomes of learners who completed the skills development sub-programmes from the 2014/15 to the 2019/20 financial periods. This report will provide an indication of the employment status of all learners who were previously tracked. It is critical for the HWSETA to understand the pathways of learners subsequent to the track and tracer study in order to further evaluate the outcomes and impact of the HWSETA-funded learning programmes and this report also provides an overview of the outcomes of learners that were followed up since they were last traced and reported that they were unemployed.

### INTRODUCTION

The Sector Education Training Authorities (SETAs) exist to drive skills development and act as advisory bodies on the education and training requirements of the sector they are appointed to serve. The Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) is one of 21 SETAs and is responsible for the education, training and skills development requirements of the health and social development sectors, as well as the veterinary sector.

The aim of the skills development interventions is to change people's lives, about enhancing their employability and aligning skills to our economy. The Health and Welfare Sector Education Training Authority (HWSETA), as mandated by the Skills Development Act (SDA), 1998, is responsible for funding and facilitating education, training and skills development interventions at workplaces of the health and social development sectors. The ultimate goal of these interventions is to close the skills gap in the sector by increasing the employability of the unemployed and career progression for those already employed. The HWSETA also carries a responsibility of evaluating the outcomes of these education, training, and skills development interventions.

The Skills Development Act (SDA), 1998, provides a framework for improving the skills of the South African workforce through national and local workplace strategies. This framework also provides for an investment in the education and training of unemployed persons. The intended outcomes of these investments are prospects of employment and self-employment of unemployed persons, improved productivity in the sector, and ultimately the quality of life of the workforce in the sector. To this end, the HWSETA tracer study seeks to draw lessons for improved skills development strategies and policies.

The HWSETA has been conducting tracer studies for the past six years and the main aim of these studies is to primarily determine the employment status of unemployed learners. The tracer study is conducted at least six months after learners have completed their sub-programmes. This report includes learners that were followed up to determine whether the learners who have previously indicated that they were unemployed have found employment since the last tracer study. This study is critical and of paramount importance as it is critical for the HWSETA to understand the employment patterns and status of learners.

### PURPOSE AND OUTCOMES OF THE STUDY

The track and tracer study evaluates the destinations of learners who completed the HWSETA funded Workplace Based Learning (WBL) programmes, including artisanship, internship, learnership and bursary skills development programmes.

It can be said that the outcome of the tracer study is to determine whether a type of programme is achieving its aims and objectives and to demonstrate its outcomes. For this particular tracer study the outcomes pertain to employment status, time taken to acquire employment and the type of employment, in terms of employment sector or types of employment short-term or long-term,

salary level; benefits (UIF, pension, medical aid benefits), and also to determine if the learners' employment is aligned to what they studied. This is critical as it is aligned with the mandate of the SETAs, which is to strengthen the Post School Education and Training (PSET) sector to prepare young people for the labour market and contribute towards skills development (DHET, 2019).

Therefore, the HWSETA is an essential role player in addressing the problem of high youth unemployment and skills development. The HWSETA contributes to skills development and assisting young people in the labour market through four Skills Development Programmes (SDP) namely the artisan, bursary, internship and learnership programmes.

The extent to which these programmes yield positive outcomes requires evaluation and track and tracing of learners with an enquiry on their employment pathways. This study also provides an overview of this, over a six-year period of intervening through skills development and work-based learning programmes.

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the track and trace study is to evaluate the outcome of HWSETA-funded learning programmes for the unemployed, which include the artisanship, bursary, internship, and learnership programmes. The track and trace studies pursued the following objectives:

- To determine the overall employment rate over a six-year period.
- To determine the qualifications that yield high absorption rates by the labour market.
- To determine the qualifications that yield better employment prospects.
- To determine if the job obtained is aligned to their qualification.
- To assess unemployed learners' activity.





# 03.

REVIEW OF THE  
HWSETA WORKBASED  
LEARNING AND THE  
BURSARY PROGRAMMES



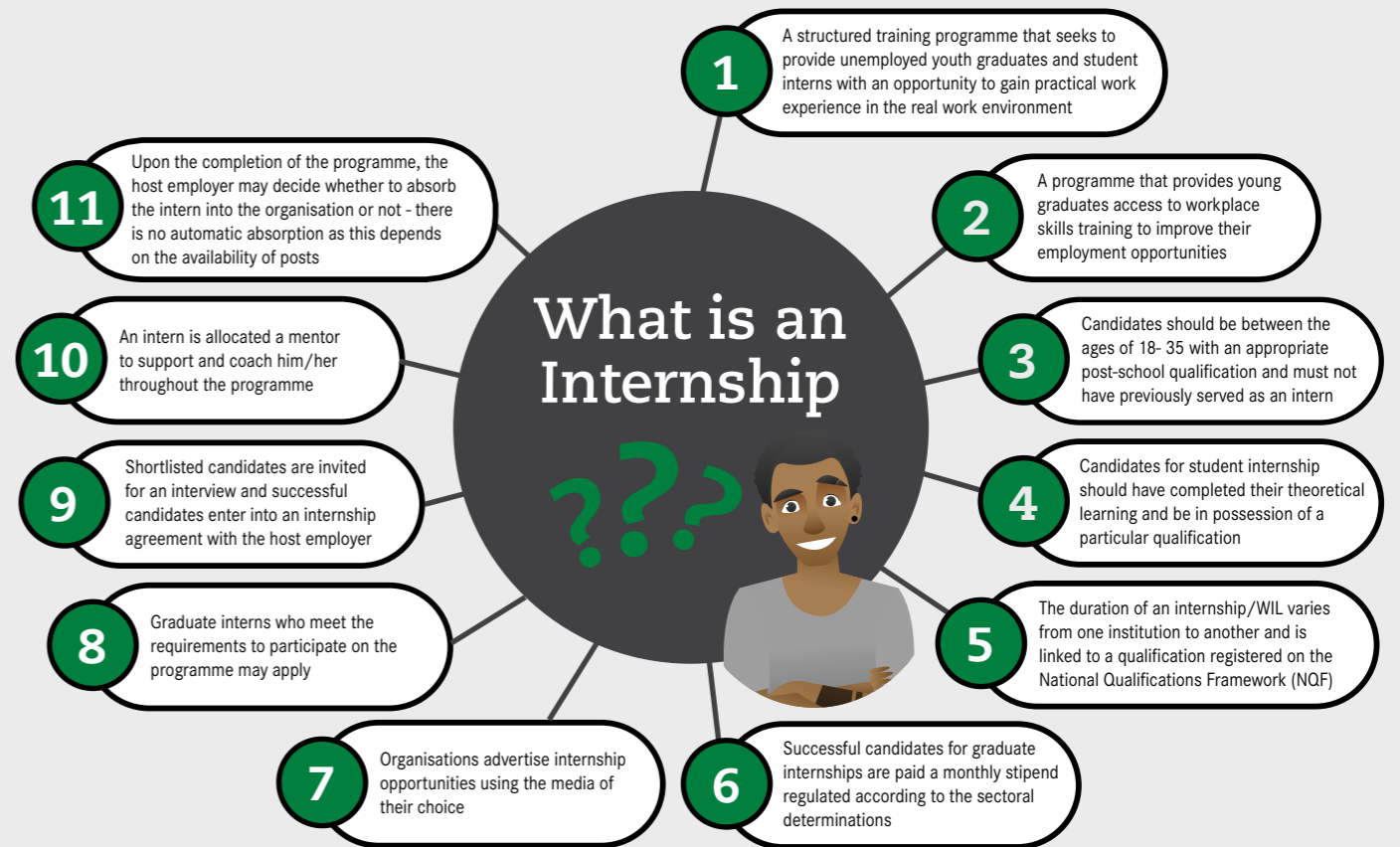
### THE BURSARY PROGRAMME

A bursary is a monetary award made by an institution to individuals or groups of people who cannot afford to pay full fees. Employers, Universities and Universities of Technology need to apply through the Expression of Interest upon advertisement by the HWSETA. The HWSETA funds learners who are enrolled in undergraduate qualifications towards a Health or Social qualification at a University or University of Technology in that respective financial year as well as learners taking vocational and occupational training at TVET colleges. The HWSETA also funds workers employed by employers in the health and social sectors.

### THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

An internship may be defined as career-specific work experience that one undertakes either during and/or after one's studies in order to gain practical experience in their field of study or career. The internship programme can assist with experience to help the learner gain a better understanding of the nature of the working world and the challenges they will face throughout their career development process. Furthermore, an internship provides the individual with the opportunity to make use of the skills acquired from the training provided at school, university or college.

## THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME



## REVIEW OF THE HWSETA WORKBASED LEARNING AND THE BURSARY PROGRAMMES

### THE ARTISANSHIP/ APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

The apprenticeship is a work-based learning programme that combines theory, practical learning, and work-based training. The learners are placed at a TVET college or training centers and are linked to employers. Once the training is completed, the learners conduct a trade test, at an accredited trade test centre.

For the purpose of this study, a learner is referred to as an individual who is either an artisan or apprentice through the Artisan programme. An artisan is any individual who has completed all steps as required, including passing the trade test. An apprentice is any individual who is currently receiving practical and theoretical training at a workplace but has not conducted the trade test.

### THE LEARNERSHIP PROGRAMME

A learnership is a structured learning programme that consists of a theoretical and a practical component leading to a qualification that is registered on the National Qualifications framework (NQF). A learnership provides a learner with an opportunity to gain experience in the labour market while studying towards a qualification.

Learnerships are regulated by a formal contract (learnership agreement) between an employer, a learner and a training provider. This agreement must be registered with the employer's relevant SETA.

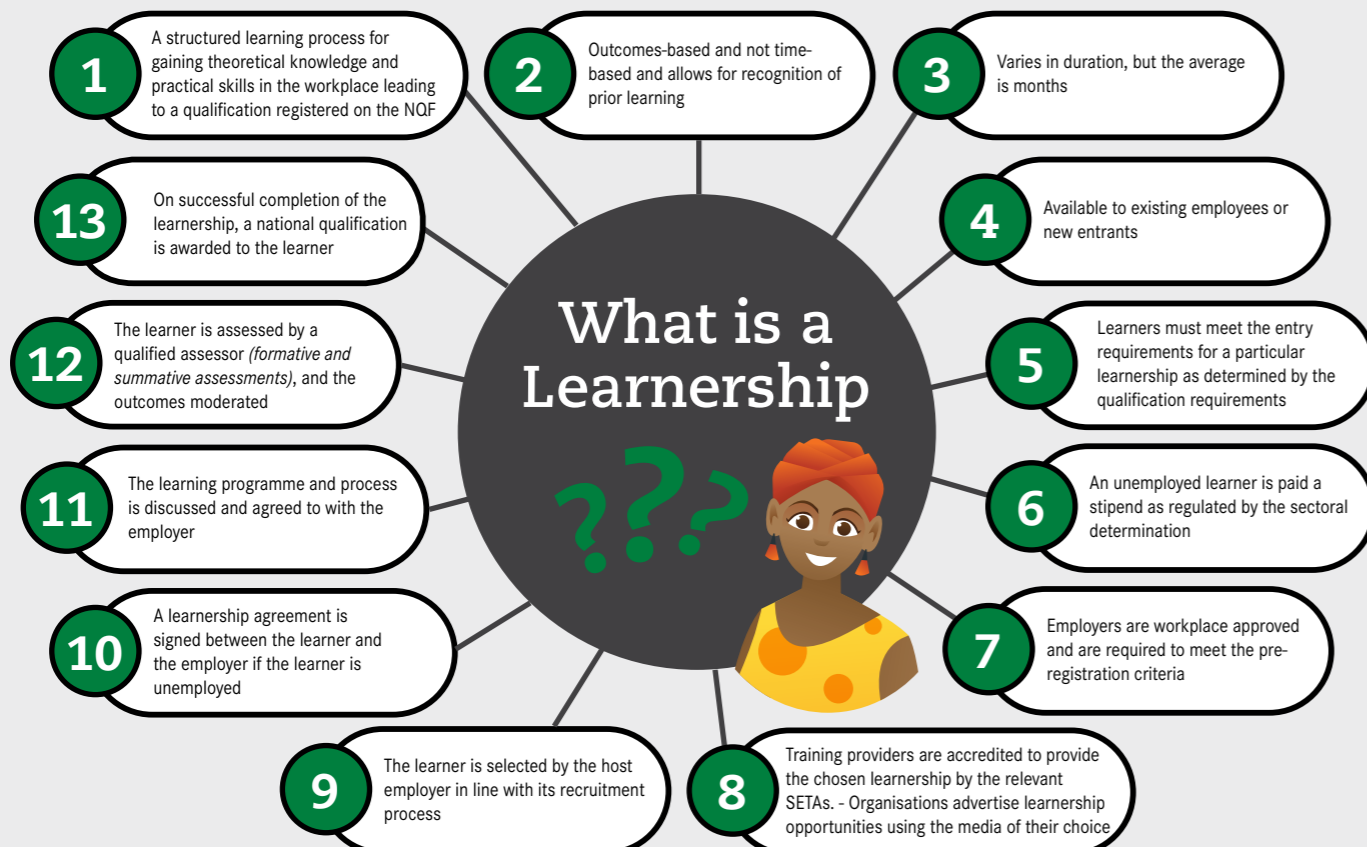
Learnerships are a key element of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) and their primary aim is to ensure the provision of skills to unemployed, or employed but unskilled individuals and increase the prospect of employability for the unemployed. Learnerships should

accommodate, and be designed to support local labour market conditions, special sector requirements, work opportunities and demands.

The learners apply by contacting potential employers directly by sending a concise CV.

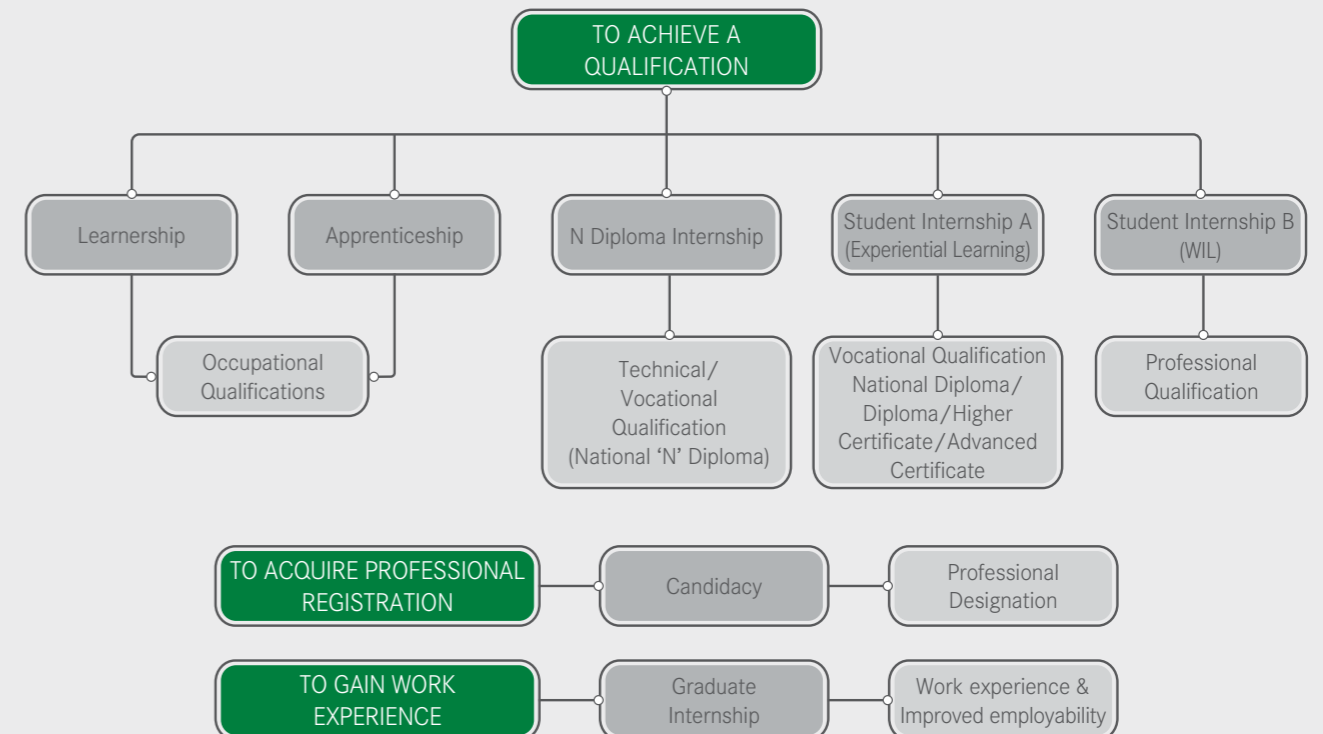


## The Learnership Programme



## Purpose Of WBL

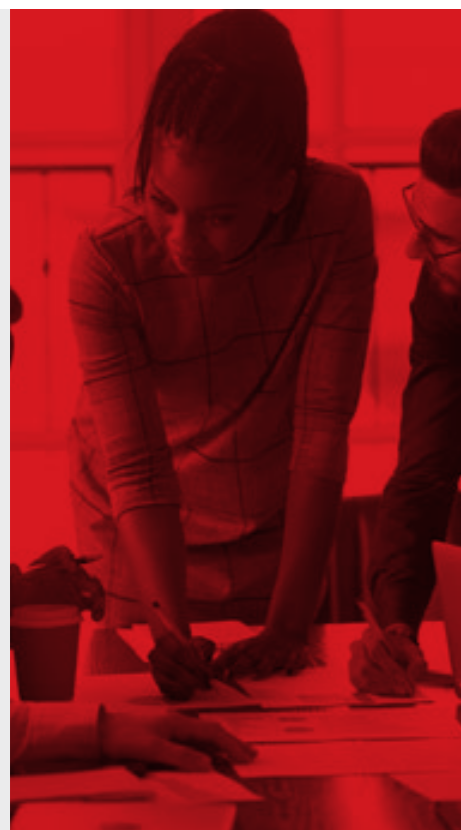
The HWSETA programmes, as indicated in the diagram professional designation, gain work experience, and below, are there to assist students to acquire a enhance employability.





# 04.

## METHODOLOGY OF THE TRACER STUDY



## METHODOLOGY OF THE TRACER STUDY

### COLLECTION AND COMPILATION OF LEARNER DATABASES

This report reviews prior track and tracer studies and followed up on learners that previously reported they were unemployed at the time they were traced.

For the prior track and tracer studies, datasets of learner responses that were traced in 2014/15, 2015/16, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 were merged together using the learner identity number as the index or a unique identifier. The databases included unemployed learners who had completed their specific programmes in the period under review. These included learners who completed the artisan, bursary, internship, and learnership programmes.

The sampling frame used for each tracer study constituted the learners' demographic information and programme details except for learners' contact details, which is a primary requirement for the telephonic interviews. At the time of data collection, learner contact details were then sourced from the project teams and respective employers in the case of the learnership programme.

The learner contact details for the artisan programme were sourced from a learner database provided by SACCI, while the learner contact details for the learnership programme were sourced from employers, SMS database (HWSETA old data management system) and SETMIS database. The databases were cleaned and validated prior to data collection. For the follow-up learners, an existing database from the previous track and tracer studies was used. However, the follow-up learners only included the learners that previously indicated that they were unemployed.

### DATA COLLECTION

For the prior tracer studies, a standardised questionnaire was utilised to collect data. The questionnaire sought to gather

information on demographics, employment status, the nature of employment and the learner's experiences and opinions regarding their respective programme.

The follow-up questionnaire sought information on the learner's current employment status, the nature of employment and the activities they are currently involved in if unemployed. The questionnaire was programmed into a computer programme called the Computer Aided Telephonic Interviews (CATI) tool in order to facilitate computer aided telephone interviews. However, for the 2014/15 study data was collected using mail.

### DATA ANALYSIS

Learner responses were computed into an excel spreadsheet during data collection. Only age was coded into two categories; that is below 35 years and above 35 years and missing data was represented with a period (.). Data analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel to generate pivot tables or cross-tables to determine relationships between variables. Frequencies and proportions were calculated to describe study participants in relation to key variables.

### TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING

In the past six years HWSETA has tracked and traced 11 458 learners which resulted in a 37% response rate of 4 252 learners. All learners with contact details were part of the tracer study.

The study employed a quantitative follow-up census methodology for contacting unemployed learners from previous track and trace studies. The two main criteria were that a learner had to have indicated that they were previously unemployed with reachable contact details. Overall, artisanship had the highest response rate while internship had the lowest response rate.

## TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Figure 3: Target population and sample size of previous track and tracer studies

Sub Programme	Total Population	Number of Responses	Response Rate
Artisanship	338	193	57%
Bursary	1061	501	47%
Internship	2349	742	32%
Learnership	7709	2816	37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11458</b>	<b>4252</b>	<b>37%</b>

The total population for the unemployed follow-up learners was 1986, however 110 learners had to be removed from the database due to duplication. This led to a total of 1876 sampled learners that were contacted to be part of the follow-up tracer study, and included learners from 2014/15 to 2019/20.

This resulted in a 51% response rate of 978 learners and the analysis below account for 978 follow-up learners who were traced to deduce as whether their employment status has changed since the last tracer study. The bursary programme had the highest response rate of 61% and the learnership programme had the

lowest response rate at 49%, even though it had the largest sample size compared to other programmes.

## Follow-up Learners

Figure 4: Target population of follow-up learners

Follow-up Learners			
Sub Programme	Total Population	Number of Responses	Response Rate
Bursary	157	96	61%
Internship	452	258	57%
Artisanship	62	33	53%
Learnership	1205	591	49%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1876</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>52%</b>



# 05.

## PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

# PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This section provides an analysis of the findings and further reflects on the trends that were identified over a period of six years including findings from the follow-up cohort. This section begins with the demographics section, followed by an analysis of the learner's employment status, time taken to acquire employment and the nature of employment and lastly the learners' current status or activities and their perceptions about the programmes they have completed.

## DEMOGRAPHICS OF LEARNERS THAT PARTICIPATED IN TRACER STUDIES

A total of 4 252 learners have been reached over the past six years on the track and tracer studies. Of these, 978 learners who previously reported that they were unemployed were followed up in 2021. As shown in figure 5, the majority of learners that were traced were female 77% (3262), 78% (3331) below the age of 35 and categorised as the youth.

In the youth age group, learners were nearly equally distributed between age groups below 26 years (38%) and 26-30 years (39%). Among those over 35 years, the majority of learners were aged 36-40 years (48%). In terms of race, the beneficiaries were predominantly Black (93%, 3964), from poor backgrounds in Gauteng Province (37%, 1584), Limpopo (20%, 847) and KwaZulu-Natal (11%, 464).

Figure 5: Learner demographics

Variable	Total Number Reached N=4252	Percentage (%) Of Total Reached
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	3262	77%
Male	990	23%
<b>Youth Status</b>		
Below 35	3331	78%
Above 35	921	22%
<b>Race</b>		
Black	3946	93%
Colored	145	3%
White	98	2%
Indian or Asian	63	1%
<b>Province</b>		
Gauteng	1584	37%
Limpopo	847	20%
KwaZulu- Natal	464	11%
Eastern Cape	357	8%
Free State	195	5%
Mpumalanga	161	4%
North-West	139	3%
Northern Cape	39	0,9%

## LEARNER EMPLOYMENT STATUS

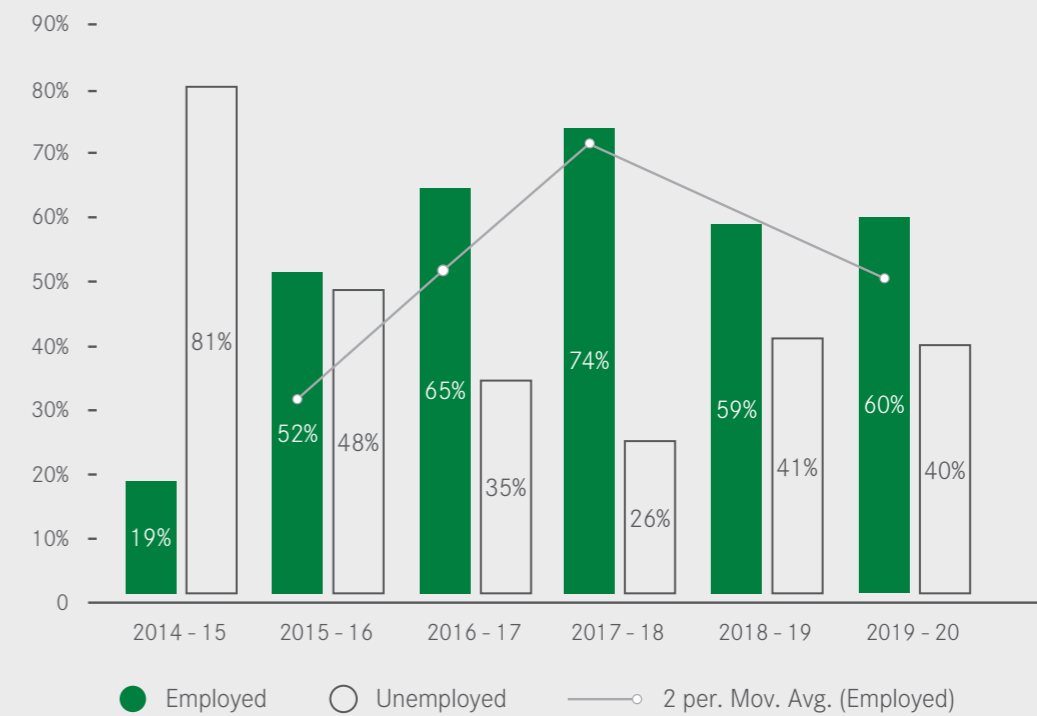
Of the total of 4252 learners that were reached between 2014 and 2019, 2376 learners reported that they were employed. The average employment rate

between 2015 and 2020 was 62%. The employment rate ranged from 52% in 2015/16 and peaked at 74% in 2017/18 and further plateaued at 60% in 2019/20. Since the employment rate in 2014/15 was

extremely low (19%), it was not included in the average calculation as it was an outlier and therefore skewed the data.

# Employment Status By Financial Year

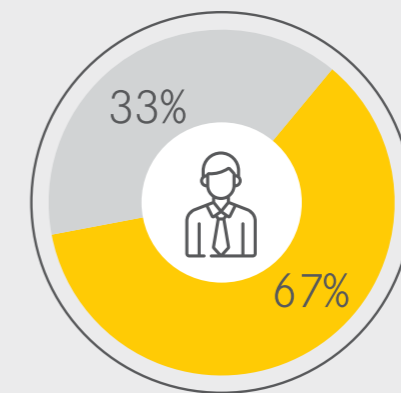
Figure 6: Employment status by financial year



# Employment Rate To Date

Figure 7: Employment status to-date

In total, 2862 of the learners are employed, translating into a 67% employment rate. Those learners who were unemployed at the time of their tracing were followed up, and 486 reported finding employment. The 67% employment rate is 0,8X higher than the country's employment rate of 56,8% reported in quarter two of 2021/22.



● Employed ● Unemployed



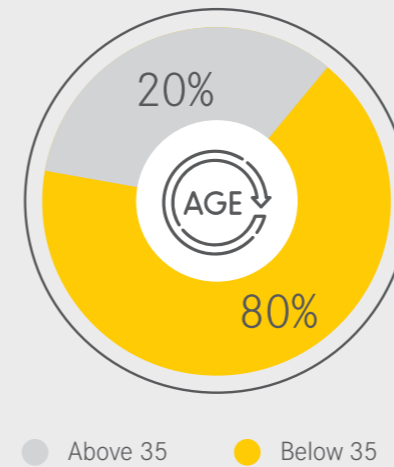
In total, 2862 of the learners are employed, translating into a 67% employment rate.



### EMPLOYMENT BY AGE

Eighty percent (2268) of the learners that found employment were youth (below 35 years) and 20% of learners above 35 years (585) found employment. Age was categorised by either being within the youth age (below 35 years) or above the youth age (above 35 year) category.

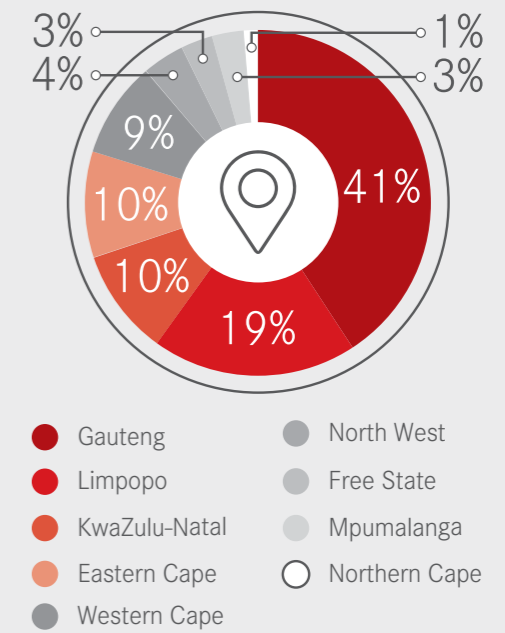
Figure 10: Employment by age category



### EMPLOYMENT BY PROVINCE

The majority of learners who reported being employed were from Gauteng (41%), Limpopo (19%), KwaZulu-Natal (10%) and Eastern Cape Provinces (10%). Provinces such as the North-West, Free State, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape had the least contribution to employment at 4%, 3%, 3%, and 1%, respectively.

Figure 11: Employment by province

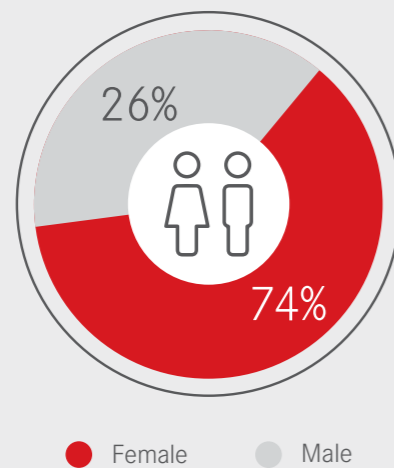


## TRENDS AND PATTERNS OF EMPLOYMENT

### EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER

Female learners tend to be more successful at finding employment when compared to male learners, although female learners make up most of the sample population.

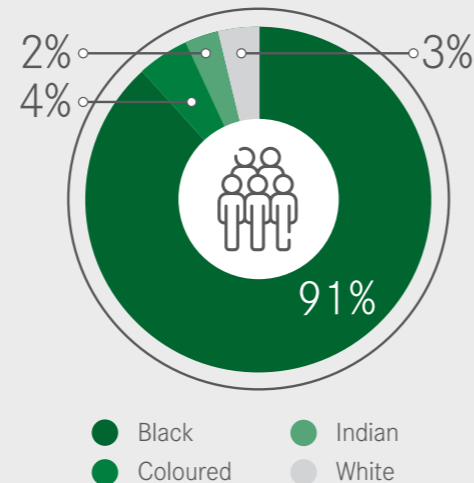
Figure 8: Employment by gender



### EMPLOYMENT BY RACE

Of all the learners who were employed, the majority were Black (91%) with minimal distribution of 4%, 3% and 2% from Coloured, White and Indian race groups, respectively.

Figure 9: Employment by race





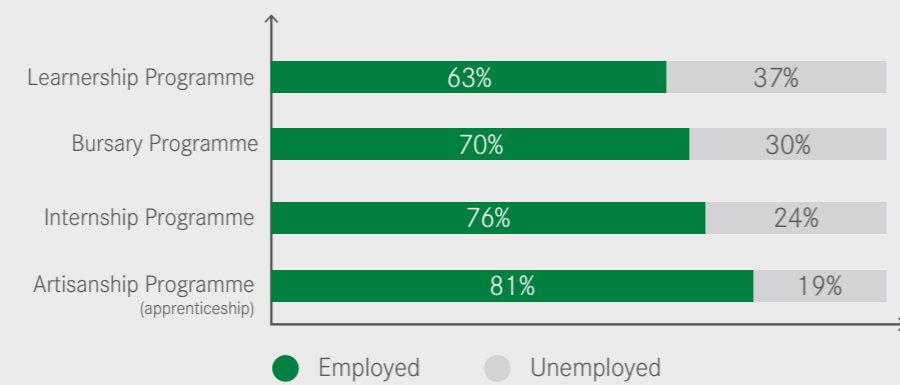


## EMPLOYMENT RATE BY PROGRAMME

### EMPLOYMENT RATE BY PROGRAMME

The artisanship programme resulted in a high employment rate of 81% (157/193) over the six-year period, followed by internships at 76% (561/742), bursaries at 70% (349/501) then learnerships at 63% (1786/2816).

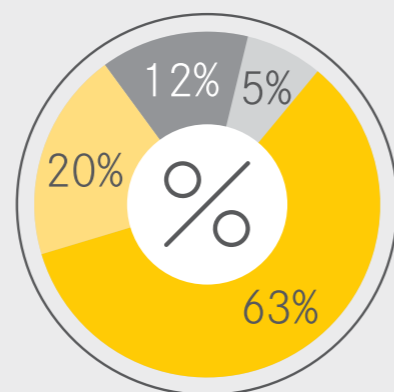
Figure 12: Employment rate by sub-programme



Among the learners employed, six in ten (63%) have completed a learnership programme, followed by an internship (20%), bursary (12%), and artisanship (5%) programmes. Due to their quick turnaround on programme completions, learnership and internship contributed

more to employment rate. The internship and learnership programmes take between one and two years to complete while the artisan and bursary programmes can take up to seven years.

Figure 13: Percentage contribution to overall employment rate



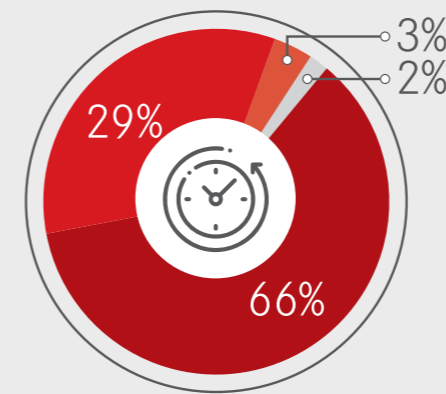
- Learnership Programme
- Internship Programme
- Bursary Programme
- Artisanship Programme (apprenticeship)

## TIME TAKEN TO ACQUIRE EMPLOYMENT

Two-thirds of learners found employment within six months of completing the programme. The HWSETA has set a six-month period for learners to find employment, and it is critical to determine how long it takes for learners to find employment.

The analysis has shown that 66% of learners who have responded to this question have found employment within six months of completing the programme, 29% have found employment between seven and 12 months, 2% have found employment between 25 and 36 months, and 3% have found employment over 36 months after completing the programme. However, the first HWSETA track and trace study conducted in 2014/15 did not include a question on time taken to find employment.

Figure 14: Time taken to find employment



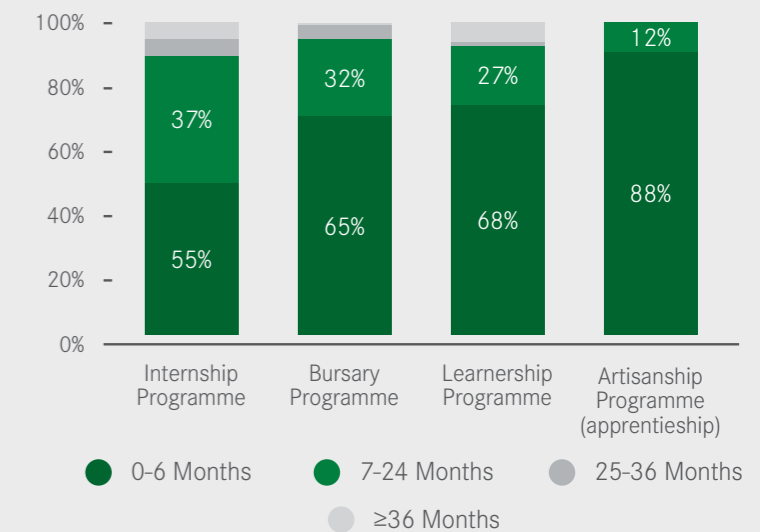
- 0-6 Months
- 7-24 Months
- ≥36 Months
- 25-36 Months

Apprenticeship and learnership programmes tend to yield high employment rates sooner (within 6 months of completion), whereas bursaries and internship programmes tend to yield high employment rates later on.

In terms of programmes that are most likely to result in employment, 88% of learners in the artisanship programme and 68% of learners in the learnership programme are likely to find employment within six months of completing the programme.

Furthermore, more than a quarter of participants in internship programmes tend to take longer to find jobs (between seven and 24 months after completing the programme).

Figure 15: Time taken to find employment by programme

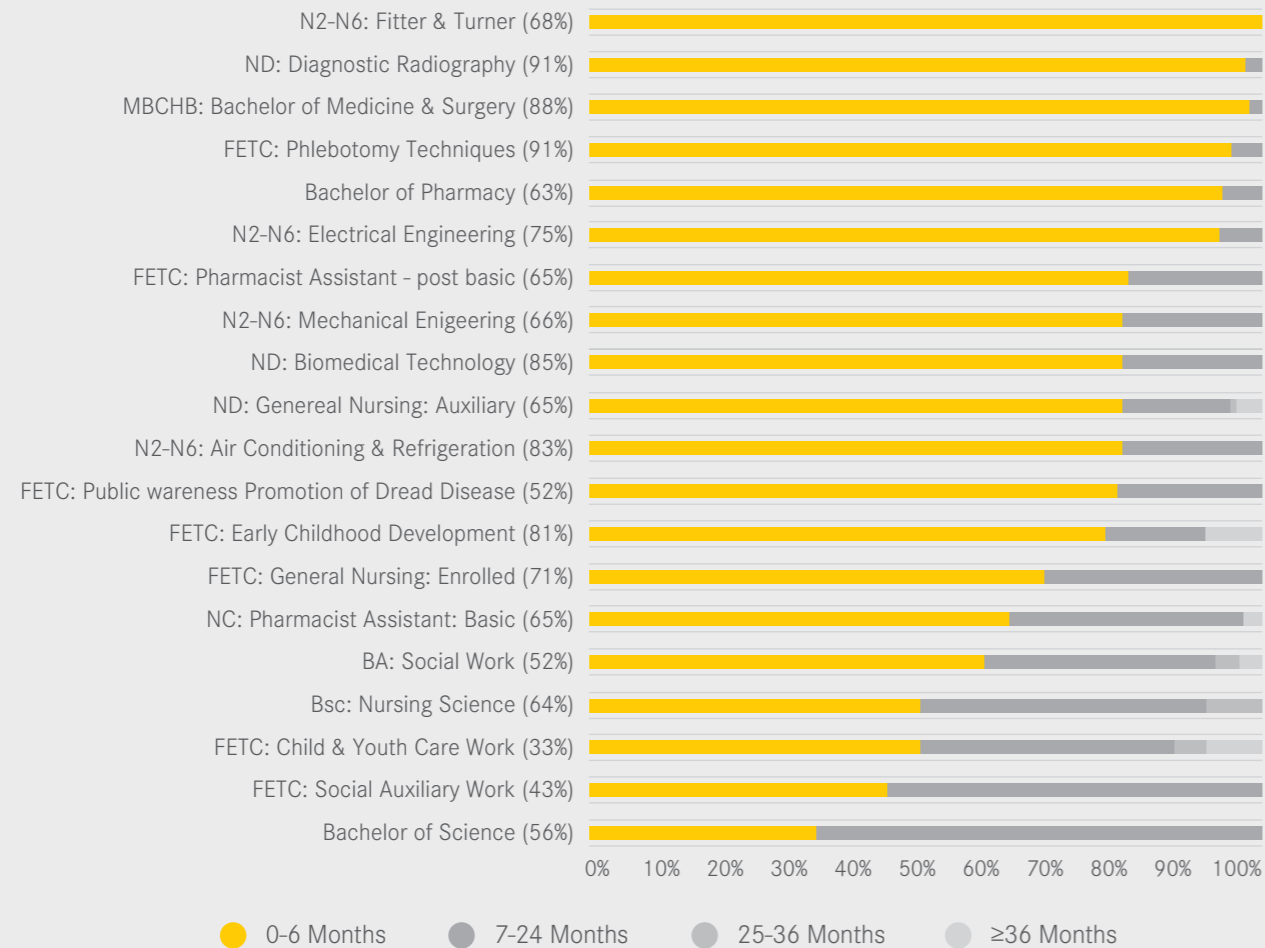


Health and artisan sector associated qualifications tend to yield employment within the first six months of completion, while social sector qualifications tend to yield employment later on. Figure 16 below represents the top 20 qualifications that yielded employment based on frequency. The N2-N6 Fitter and Turner certificate seemed to yield high employment rates within 0-6 months followed by the National Diploma in Diagnostic Radiography. Both qualifications yielded more than

90% employment rate each within 0-6 months, indicating that they are in high demand. The Social auxiliary work and the Child and Youth Care Work yield higher employment rates in terms of frequency however the learners take longer to find employment. Over 40% of learners find employment within six months of completing the programme, although it can take as long as three years or more. Those qualifications with a low number of learners tend to yield high employment rates, while

those with a high number of learners tend to yield low employment rates since those learners take a long time to find employment.

Figure 16: Top 20 qualifications ranked by time taken to find employment



\*Percentages in brackets (%) show the overall employment rate for each qualification before it is disaggregated.

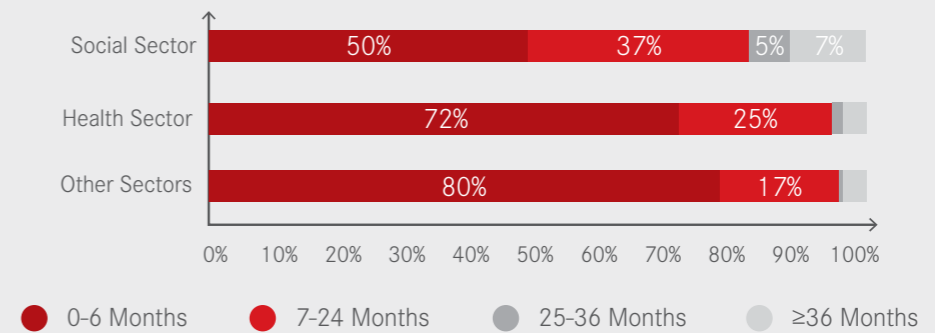
## EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR

Health and artisan (other) sectors employ more learners within six months of completion than the social sector that employs half the learners within six months of completion while the other half can take up to 36 months to find

employment. This is supported by the type of qualifications obtained, where we found that health and artisan qualifications led to employment more quickly than the social sector. It is nevertheless worthwhile to note that

the qualifications reported in tracer studies depend upon the output, which is the number of completed learners for a given year.

Figure 17: Employment by sector



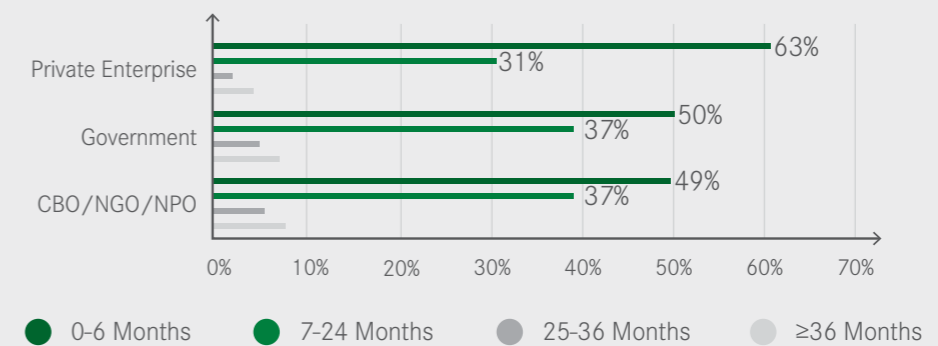
## EMPLOYMENT BY ESTABLISHMENT TYPE

The private sector absorbs six in ten learners within six months of completion, while the government and non-profit sectors each employ

half of the learners within six months. Government departments and NPOs tend to employ the other half of learners after completion, which can take up to three

years. This can be attributed to a lack of funding or late approval of funds in the government and NPO sector.

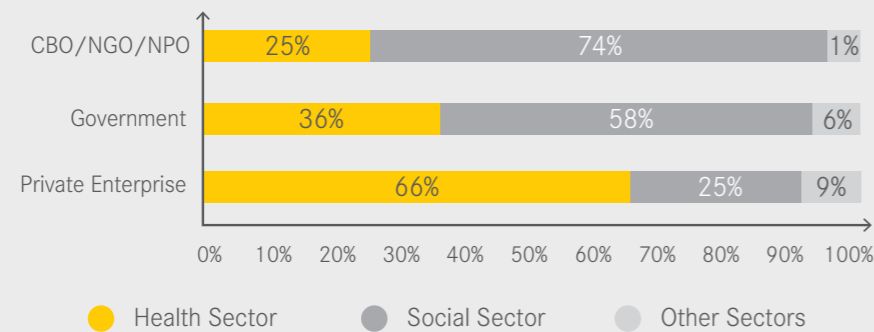
Figure 18: Employment by establishment type



## EMPLOYMENT BY ESTABLISHMENT

Private sector employers are more likely to employ learners with a health sector associated qualification. Whereas the government sector employs learners with both health and social sector qualifications, but more with a social sector associated qualification. The majority of learners with social sector associated qualifications are employed in the NPO sector, while the vast majority of learners who hold artisan qualifications are employed in the private sector or government.

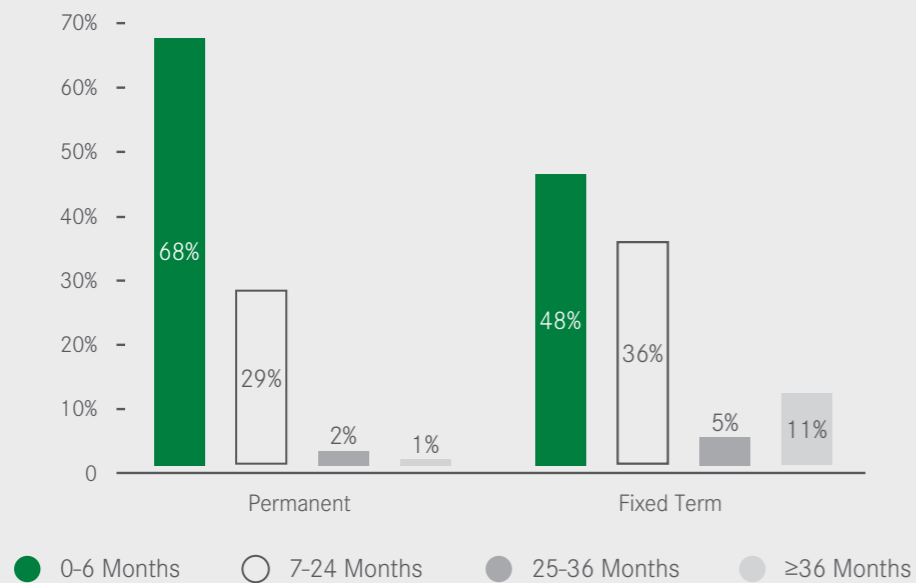
Figure 19: Employment by establishment type and sector qualification



## EMPLOYMENT TYPE

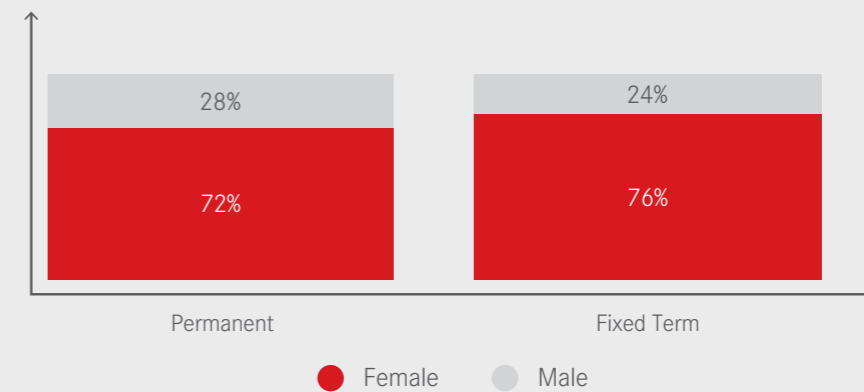
More than two thirds of learners who found employment within six months of completing their programme were employed permanently. The majority of learners who took longer to find employment were employed on a fixed-term basis. The majority found jobs within seven to 24 months of completing, while one in ten took over three years to find a job.

Figure 20: Employment type by time it took to find employment



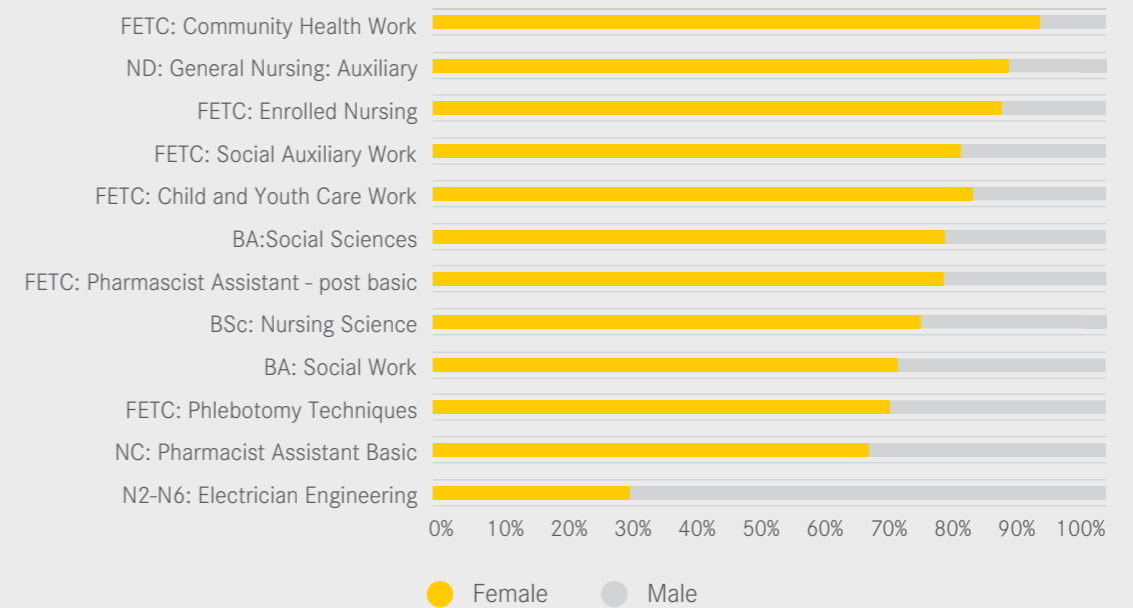
On a gender-disaggregated basis, there is a marginal difference between the number of females and males employed on a permanent basis or on a fixed term basis since 72% of females are employed on a permanent basis, compared to 28% of males, while 76% of females are employed on a fixed-term basis, compared to 24% of males.

Figure 21: Employment type by gender



The gender breakdown of fixed-term employment. The majority of women employed on a fixed-term basis have obtained a qualification in the health and social sector, while the majority of men possess an artisan qualification.

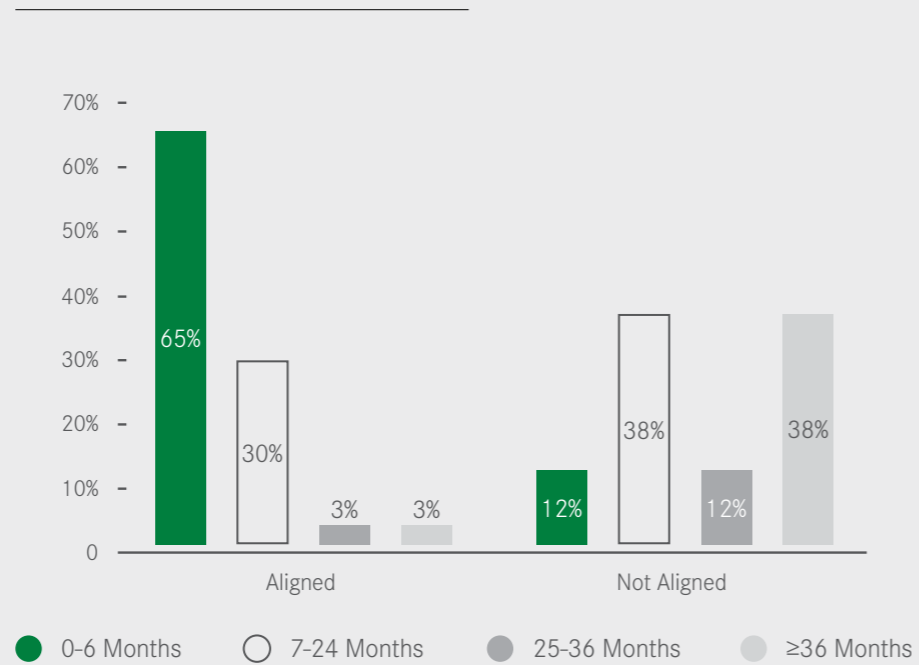
Figure 22: Fixed-term employment by qualification and gender



Approximately 60% of learners found jobs aligned to their qualifications within six months of completing the programme. However, the alignment of qualifications to employment decreases over time. The longer it takes to find a job, the less likely it is that it will align with qualification.

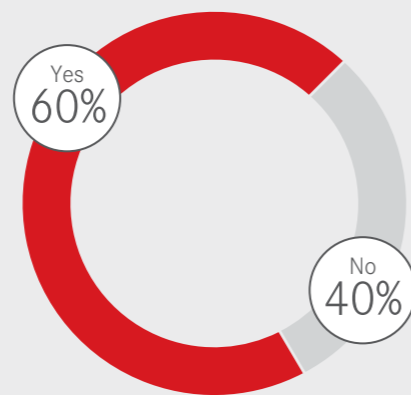
Learners who take between seven and 36 months, or longer, to find employment are more likely to experience this. Overall, the study shows that learners are using the HWSETA-funded qualifications after completing the programme.

Figure 23: Employment aligned to qualification



In addition, learners who have obtained employment report that 60% were absorbed by the same employer who provided them with training, while 40% had to find work elsewhere.

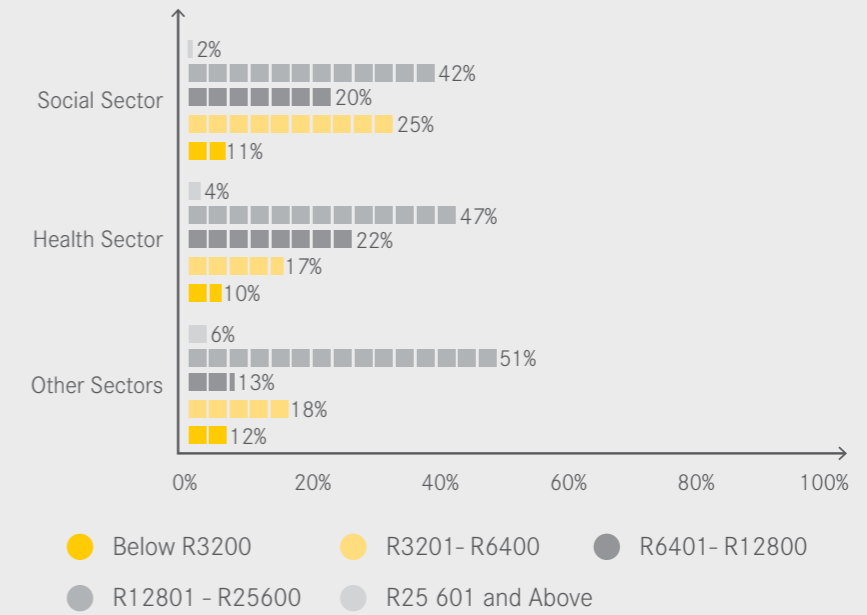
Figure 24: Employment provided by same employer



On average, 45% of learners (911) earn between R12 801 and R25 600 per month. In the artisan sector, 51% earned salaries between R12 801 and R25 600, followed by 47% in the health

sector and 42% in the social sector. Overall, 3% earned a salary of R25 600 or higher, of which 6% came from the artisan sector and 4% from the health sector.

Figure 25: Reported monthly salary

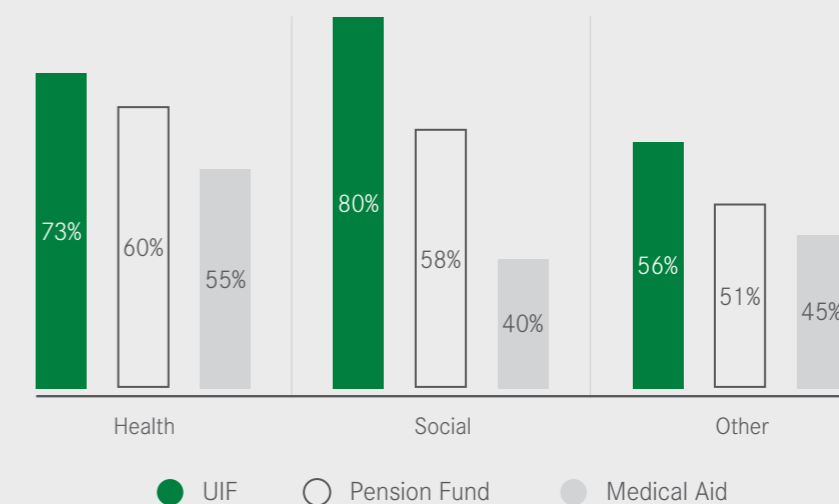


### EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

As compared to other sectors, the health and social sectors tend to offer more benefits to their employees. UIF benefits were reported by 80% of learners in the social sector, 73% in the health sector, and 56% in other (artisanship) sectors. Among learners in the

health, social, and other sectors, 60%, 58%, and 51% have received pension funds, respectively. In comparison with UIF and pension, medical aid was less common in the health, social, and other sectors, with 55%, 40%, and 45% of learners receiving medical aid from their employers, respectively.

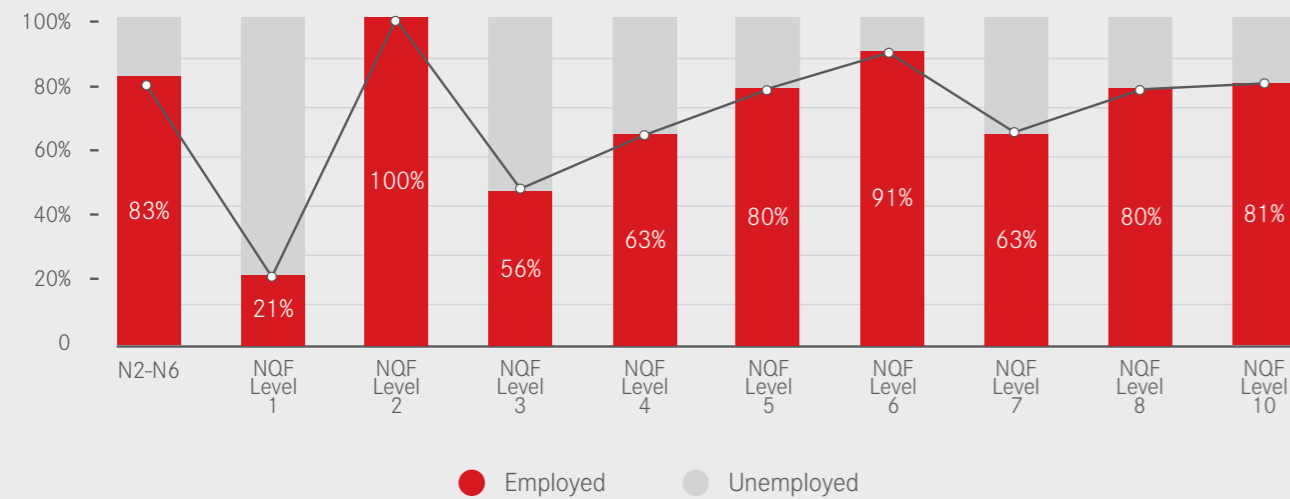
Figure 26: Employment benefits by sector



### EMPLOYMENT BY NQF LEVEL

As the NQF level increased, the employment rate increased. NQF level 2, NQF level 6 and N2-N6 yielded the highest employment rates. Further, NQF level 1 had the lowest employment rate of 21% compared to all the NQF levels.

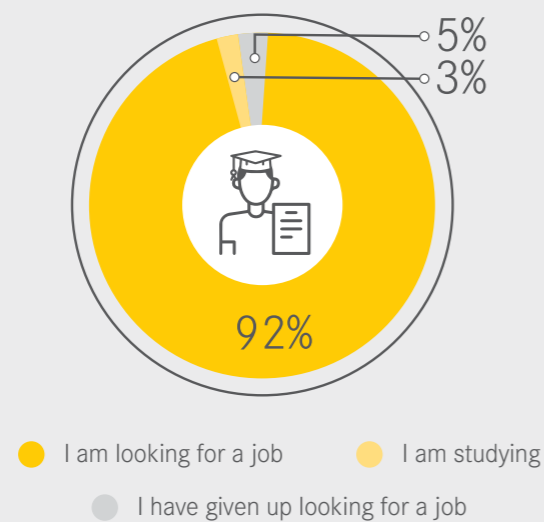
Figure 27: Employment status by NQF level



### UNEMPLOYED LEARNER ACTIVITY

Of the 1390 learners who have reported that they were unemployed between 2014 and 2020, 92% are still looking for employment while 3% are studying and 5% have reported that they have given up looking for employment.

Figure 28: Trends in unemployed learner activity



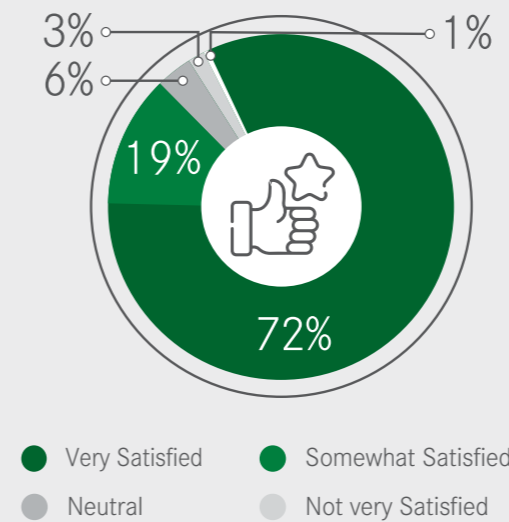
### PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAMME BY THE LEARNERS

Over 80% of the learners found the programme they completed was useful, while 2% felt that the programme was not useful or have not met their needs. Furthermore, 72% of the learners indicated that they were satisfied with the programme they have completed, while 3% felt otherwise.

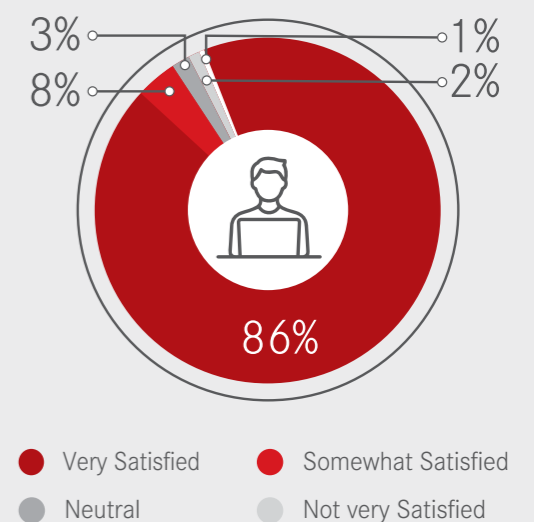
However, they have raised concerns that it is costly to find a job as many of them use the internet to find employment, and further indicated that there were limited advertised vacant posts linked to their qualification which indicates a certain level of misaligned market and labour distribution. Some learners cited lack of opportunities and insufficient capacity to absorb all learners.

### OVERALL LEARNER SATISFACTION

Figure 29: Programme usefulness and learner satisfaction



### PROGRAMME USEFULNESS





# 06.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS



## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section provides a discussion of findings from previous track and tracer studies and followed-up learners to determine trends and patterns of programmes outcomes. This section begins with the learner demographics, followed by a discussion on the learners' employment status and time taken to find employment.

### LEARNER BENEFICIARIES REACHED

11 548 learners were tracked over a six-year period between 2014/15 and 2019/20 and of these (40%) 4 252 learners have been reached over the same period. The beneficiaries reached were mainly female (77%), below 35 years (78%), and Black (93%). Gauteng accounted for 37% of learners (1684), Limpopo 20% (847), and KwaZulu-Natal 11% (464).

Additionally, these findings align with HWSETA's mandate of providing learning and skills development interventions to unemployed youth from disadvantaged communities to contribute to economic growth in the sector.

### EMPLOYMENT TRENDS OVER A SIX-YEAR PERIOD

Employment was defined as the number of learners who reported having acquired employment and receiving regular monthly remuneration.

During the past six years of the track and trace study, 67% of learners (2862) have secured employment. The remaining 33% cannot find employment. The reported employment rate has fluctuated over the years but has plateaued at 60% since 2018/19.

In comparison with the current unemployment rate in the country of 56.8%, the HWSETA's 67% success rate certainly

proves that its learning programmes do yield fairly high employment rates. This further suggests the HWSETA's skills development programmes are positively contributing to the country's employment rate by demonstrating that learners have managed to transition from learning/school to work.

In this synthesis report, it was revealed that the majority of learners who found employment were Black (91%) and female (74%) and young (80%, below 35 years old). Many of the employed learners were in Gauteng Province (41%), 19% in Limpopo, while 10% are in KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape, each. It is encouraging to see rural provinces like Limpopo and the Eastern Cape also providing employment, despite Gauteng being the economic hub of the country.

Furthermore, this report examines how employment varies, not just across financial years, but between sub-programmes as well. The artisan programme is the most successful because it tends to yield a high employment rate (81%) followed by internship (76%) and bursary (70%) then learnership (63%).

Similarly, the contributions of each sub-programme to overall employment rate vary between the different sub-programmes. Over the years, learnership programmes have consistently contributed more towards employment rates with an average of 63%; this is followed by internship programmes at 20%, bursary programmes at 12% and artisan programmes at 5%.

Due to the short turnaround time for programme completions, learnerships and internships contributed more than the bursary and artisan programmes. While learners can complete their internship and learnership programmes within 1-2 years, artisans and bursaries generally require two to seven years.

### AVERAGE TIME TAKEN BY LEARNERS TO FIND EMPLOYMENT

The HWSETA has set a six-month period as the target for learners to find employment upon completion of their programmes. Furthermore, the six-month period serves as a proxy indicator of the labour market's demand.

In the past six years, 66% (1310) of learners who responded to this question found a job within six months of completing the programme. In addition, 29% found employment within a year, while 2% and 3% found jobs within 36 months and over 36 months, respectively.

These statistics are however based on only those learners who responded to the survey, as certain tracer studies, for example the 2014/15 study, did not include this question, since this was the first track and tracer study conducted by the HWSETA.

Additionally, it was determined that unemployed learners could take up to 84 months to find employment. Lack of opportunities and an insufficient capacity to absorb all learners have been cited as reasons why it has taken learners so long to find employment.

The analysis demonstrates that learners in the artisan and learnership programmes have a good chance of finding employment within six months of completing their training. In addition, learners from internship programmes (45%) typically take longer than other learners to find employment.

In terms of qualifications, the N2-N6 Fitters and Turners, the National Diploma in Diagnostic Radiography, and the Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery yield high employment rates within 0-6 months. In six months, these qualifications resulted in a 95-100% employment rate.

Qualifications with a low frequency and from the health and artisan sectors tend to yield high employment rates and swiftly. In contrast, the Social Auxiliary Work, Child and Youth Care, and Social Work degrees had higher frequencies but

lower employment rates, ranging from 45% to 61%. Furthermore, learners with a social sector qualification took longer to obtain employment, with 33% - 67% of learners finding employment after six months of completion.

### NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT PROVIDED FOR HWSETA FUNDED LEARNERS

Since 2014/15, employment has become more common in the health and artisan sectors, while the social sector continues to absorb fewer learners. The health sector employs most learners within six months of completing the programme, and then the social sector absorbs the learners six months later.

In addition, this trend is reflected in the types of qualifications sought, such as the National Diploma in Diagnostic Radiology, and the Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery that produce jobs within six months, while the BA: Social Work yields jobs after six months.

The majority of the learners are employed in the private sector, followed by the government and the nonprofit organisations. Learners who hold a social sector qualification are often employed in the government or non-profit organisations, while learners with health qualifications are usually employed in the private sector.

Furthermore, the analysis reveals that the private sector tends to employ more learners after six months of completing the programme, as opposed to government and non-profit organisations, that tend to employ 50% of learners after six months. Learners with a social sector qualification may face delays in finding employment because of a lack of funding or late budget approval by these establishments.

The learners who were employed on a permanent basis constituted two-thirds of the sample.

However, the proportion of learners securing permanent employment tends to decrease over time. The percentage

of learners who have found employment on a fixed term basis remains relatively low, at 31%, and the majority of them are employed after six months. Additionally, there is no difference among male and female learners in terms of permanent or fixed-term employment. Female learners who are employed on a fixed-term basis are more likely to hold a health or social sector qualification, while male learners hold an artisan qualification.

Learners in the health sector are most likely to receive contributions from their employers toward their UIFs, pension funds, and medical aid, followed by learners in the artisans and social sectors. Further, employers contributed the least to medical aid across all sectors. The findings also showed that NQF level 10, NQF level 6 and N2-N6 tend to have higher employment rates, while NQF level 1 had the lowest employment rate. It is important to note that the qualifications included in the tracer study are determined by the number of completed learners for a particular financial year.

It is encouraging to see that almost half of the employed learners earn monthly salaries between R12 801 and R25 600, in addition to which, candidates in the artisan and health sectors tend to earn higher salaries. The fact that 10% of learners earn less than R3200 on average is a concern and may be due to their lower skill level.

Notably, a majority of learners report acquiring jobs that are aligned with their qualifications, which suggests that learners use their qualifications to demonstrate their skills while seeking employment. Moreover, two-thirds of the learners were employed by the same employer that trained them which is indicative that the HWSETA engages learners in skills training initiatives that provides matching and therefore connect them to employment opportunities.

In the unemployed group, 92% of learners said they are still seeking a job, while only 5% said they have given up looking, and the remainder are studying.



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the past six years, 67% of learners have found employment. Qualifications influence employment prospects. Often, qualifications that are in high demand have a higher employment rate because learners are quickly absorbed into the job market.

The sector also impacts employment as it has been found that the health and other (artisan) industries generate a higher employment rate.

Furthermore, the level of skills is also an important factor in determining employment, with higher qualifications producing high employment rates quickly. When learners find employment quickly, they are more likely to be employed in positions that match their qualifications.

According to the analysis, the type of employer also influences employment, with the private sector employing most learners soon after completion and the public and non-profit sectors employing learners after six months.

In conclusion, employment tends to be influenced by the labour market demand, which is influenced by the type of qualification, the type of sector, the level of skills, and the type of establishment. The employment rate and the absorption rate associated with certain qualifications demonstrate the value for money of HWSETA's resource allocation.

Learners are clearly transitioning from learning to employment that aligns with their fields of study. Therefore, it is important

to acknowledge the efforts that have been made in ascertaining the level of progress thus far.

In addition, it is recommended that the HWSETA continue track and trace studies in order to monitor the learning programmes and determine whether the HWSETA interventions have produced the desired outcomes.

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- STATISTICS SA. 2021. *The Unemployment rate among young people*

### LEARNERS PERCEPTION OF THE PROGRAMME

It is also important to determine if the HWSETA interventions proved useful besides helping learners find employment. Overall, learners are satisfied with the programme and find it useful. However, they have expressed concern that finding a job can be expensive despite the fact that many people use the internet for job searching, and further indicated that there were few jobs posted linked to their qualifications, indicative of a misaligned market and labour distribution.

In general, a subset of learners indicated that the HWSETA programmes assisted and enabled them to realise their career aspirations and further indicated that they are using the skills they acquired from the programmes. Some learners cited insufficient opportunities and capacity to accommodate all learners as reasons for not finding employment.