

MEDIA RELEASE PSA calls for urgent plan amidst failure to place 30 000 TVET students

DATE 4 June 2026

EMBARGO None

ENQUIRIES communication@psa.co.za

The Public Servants Association (PSA) is extremely concerned about the ongoing Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) placement crisis, which has left more than 30 000 students awaiting workplace training opportunities.

This situation highlights a systemic failure in the skills development pipeline, where students who have successfully completed the theoretical component of their studies are unable to transition into practical workplace training, a mandatory requirement for qualification and entry into the labour market.

This backlog delays the academic progression of students and exacerbates the already critical youth-unemployment crisis in South Africa. Many affected students come from disadvantaged backgrounds and rely on timely completion of their programmes to access job opportunities and support their families. The situation is concerning for a Country that has close on six million unemployed young people. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that there are about 165 000 students whose certificates are withheld by tertiary institutions of higher learning owing to an escalating student-debt crisis. The continued delay undermines the South Africa's broader economic objectives, particularly efforts aimed at addressing scarce skills, boosting industrial development, and strengthening the public-sector workforce.

The PSA calls on the Department of Higher Education and Training, Sector Education and Training Authorities, and all relevant stakeholders to urgently fast-track the placement of affected students into accredited workplaces. Partnerships between government, state-owned entities, and the private sector must be strengthened, supported by adequate funding and structured placement programmes. Coordination and planning should be improved to eliminate and prevent such backlogs.

The fact that the TVET continues training with no output as not assisting as these students are unable to complete their studies and thus remain subjected to abject poverty. At start of Youth Month in June 2026, the PSA calls for urgent, tangible, integrated plans to ensure desired outcomes for South Africa's young people.

END