

College Campus launches tertiary incentive scheme

College Campus has launched a unique tertiary incentive scheme in which students who register in 2013 for degrees will be rewarded by College Campus with R10 000 when they graduate.

The scheme has been devised against a concerning backdrop of student dropouts, known as attrition, in tertiary institutions and will provide a means for learners to exploit their potential and contribute to boosting the skills pool in South Africa. Dr Jon Pocock, academic leader in teaching and learning at the University of KwaZulu-Natal's School of Engineering, made a case study of the crisis and wrote in the South African Journal of Science:

"The problem of student retention and completion continues to trouble academics and administrators in higher education systems worldwide ... In sub-Saharan Africa [the problem] is further compounded by the loss of potential skilled workers within developed economies, thus slowing economic growth."

Pocock's colleague, Professor Michael Murray of the School of Statistics and Actuarial Science at the university, was quoted as saying that about 40% of students drop out in their first year of study.

Inadequate family support, apathy, despondency and a lack of immediate incentives

While some students who arrive at these institutions are possibly unprepared academically and emotionally, College Campus' MD, Genevieve Allen, added that inadequate family support, apathy, despondency and a lack of immediate incentives are also to blame.

"We see how they battle. It's a nationwide phenomenon and the dropout rates do not respect race or socio-economic status."

Allen explained the thinking behind the incentive: "Even if students add a year to their studies - through failing one or two subjects - they'll still receive a portion of the R10 000, which is calculated on a sliding scale. We want to encourage them by instilling a sense of hope and pride. If we need to do that through an external source, then we're prepared to do so."