

Capacity Building for TVET Lecturers through Open Learning: Workshop Report

Workshop Details

Date: 1 March 2016

Time: 9:00 – 15:30

Venue: Council on Higher Education Auditorium, Quintin Brand Street, Perseus Technopark, Pretoria

Facilitator: Ms Trudi van Wyk, Acting Chief Director: Social Inclusion, Equity, Access and Quality, DHET

1. Welcome and Introduction

Ms van Wyk welcomed all present and introduced members on the DHET team. She gave a brief overview of the expected outcomes of the workshop.

Ms van Wyk stated that the Capacity Building of TVET lecturers through Open Learning (OL) project, with a budget of R30 million, forms part of a much broader EU-funded project, namely the Teaching and Learning Development Sector Support programme (TLDSSP), with a budget of R200 million.

The objectives of the workshop were:

- To get a shared understanding of the TVET College lecturer development and open learning environment;
- To get a shared understanding of the parameters of the sub-programme;
- To identify the development imperatives with respect to universities offering TVET college lecturer programmes;
- To identify where support is needed for offering TVET college lecturer programmes;
- To determine how universities can participate in and benefit from the sub-programme, and
- To develop a high level project plan with activities and timeframes for the sub-programme (Agenda is annexed at **Annexure A**).

The workshop was attended by the following Universities:

- University of Limpopo;
- University of the Witwatersrand;
- Tshwane University of Technology;
- Vaal University of Technology;
- Durban University of Technology;
- Cape Peninsula University of Technology;
- Central University of Technology;
- University of Free State;
- University of South Africa;
- University of Pretoria;
- North West University;
- University of Venda;
- University of Western Cape; and
- University of Zululand.

The DHET was represented by:

- Ms Trudi van Wyk, Acting Chief Director: Social Inclusion, Equity, Access and Quality;
- Dr Whitfield Green, Chief Director: Teaching and Learning Development;
- Ms Gloria Maaka-Tlokana, Director: Development Support;
- Mr Letshego Mokeki, Acting Director: Career Development and Open Learning;
- Mr Victor Mathonsi, Director: Special Projects;
- Ms Tanya Yohan, Project Coordinator: Open Learning;
- Ms Nyame Xotyeni, Deputy Director: Career Development Information Services; and
- Mr George Modiba, Senior Administration Clerk, Open Learning.

(Attendance Register annexed as **Annexure B**).

The following documentation were distributed as source documents at the workshop:

- Concept Note: Open Learning in Post School Education and Training (February 2013) (**Annexure C**);
- Concept Framework for an Open Learning System in Post School Education and Training in South Africa (September 2013) (**Annexure D**);
- Extract from the Business Plan (**Annexure E**);
- White Paper for Post-School Education and Training (referenced) (**Annexure F**).

2. Understanding and Defining Open Learning (OL)

During a presentation Ms van Wyk outlined the contextual framework defining OL in Post-School Education and Training (PSET) (**Annexure G**). She discussed how the current understanding of OL is supported by the White Paper for PSET.

Ms van Wyk described OL as a teaching and learning approach, and reiterated that OL should not be equated to distance education or e-learning but that instead, OL is descriptive of a learning approach that is learner centered, flexible, and which removes barriers to accessing learning. It is important that participants understand issues of OL as described in Annexures C and D.

Ms van Wyk noted that the current infrastructure and resources at TVET colleges would not be sufficient to achieve the mandated outcomes of the White Paper for PSET of 2.5 million students in TVET colleges by 2030, and that new teaching modalities should be explored in order to meet this future demand.

The five elements of an effective OL system as outlined in the White Paper are as follows:

- A reputable network of education and training providers;
- Quality learning resources;
- Access to technology;

- A robust quality assurance system; and
- Lecturer and institutional capacity-building to deliver training and develop materials in an OL modality.

Recommendation:

It was recommended that the project includes the development of a deep understanding of OL (what OL is, what OL implementation requires and what competencies are required for OL implementation) in participating Universities.

3. National Open Learning System (NOLS)

Ms van Wyk briefly introduced the complementary open learning project in the DHET, namely the development of a National Open Learning System (NOLS). The outcomes of this project are:

- Development of a national open learning system in the programme areas identified viz:
 - Skills programmes (newly registered National Occupational Qualifications);
 - The development of subjects for the National Senior Certificate for Adults (NASCA);
 - TVET College subjects that are not widely offered at TVET Colleges, e.g. Physical Science; and
 - Career Development Practitioners' programmes for out-of-school youth to assist in Career Development Centres/walk-in centres/high schools.

Integral to this outcome is the development of high quality learning materials that will be published as Open Educational Resources (OER).

- Development of institutional capacity to deliver courses in the proposed programme areas;
- Collection and publication of case studies on the application of open learning in post schooling that can be shared amongst institutions and countries;
- Development of a cadre of course developers

- Coordination and research on the use of Open Educational Resources in post school education and training.

The newly registered National Occupational Certificate for Electricians (SAQA ID: 671101000) is a 3-year NQF Level 4 qualification (360 credits) which comprises theory, practical and work integrated learning (WIL) components. The formal assessment of this qualification is a trade test, and this implies that students must have undergone the requisite workplace exposure to qualify for the trade test. This skills programme will be the first to be developed on the NOLS. The course integrates the three components mentioned.

Several OL principles will be piloted including:

- Students can register for any module/s, in any sequence on the system;
- A pre-test will be administered to determine the level of the student in the specific topic of the module;
- For the theory component the student will do self-directed course material and self-assessments. The practical component will be done in conjunction with a training institution and will be assessed by the institution. The WIL component will be done at a workplace and will be verified by means of worksheets and log books;
- While studying the course, the students will complete a number of self-assessments, which will assist them in identifying whether they are competent to move on to the next module of the course;
- If the student demonstrates competence in the assessment, they will receive a “badge” as proof of competence. “Badges” will be issued for the theory, practical and WIL components; and
- Once all the required modules for a qualification have been completed, the student may register with an institution for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) purposes, and based on the outcome, the student may either obtain further training and development or go into formal assessment for certification.

Recommendation:

It was recognised that the NOLS project has synergy with the Capacity Building for TVET College Lecturers through Open Learning project and recommended that Project Managers of the two projects have to plan coherently.

4. TVET College Lecturer Development

Dr Green and Ms van Wyk gave an overview of the current TVET College Lecturer Development Programmes including the:

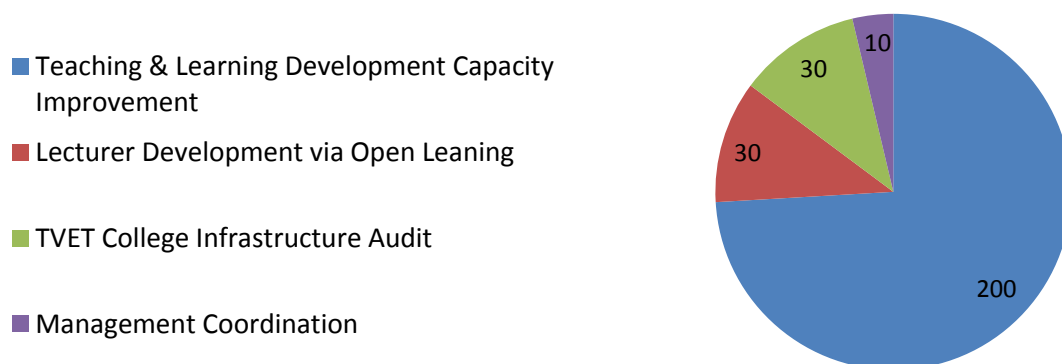
- Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching;
- Diploma in Technical and Vocational Education and Training; and
- B Ed in Technical and Vocational Teaching

Recommendation:

It was agreed that the Capacity Building for TVET Lecturers through Open Learning project will initially focus on courses that can be offered in the above existing qualifications for TVET College lecturers.

5. Capacity Building of TVET College Lecturers through Open Learning Sub-Programme

Ms van Wyk, supported by Dr Green gave an overview of the TLDSSP programme:



The principles of the TLDSSP are:

- The programme is envisaged to have a systemic impact on the quality of teacher education, and to contribute to improving the national university-based system of teacher education;
- The outcomes must be integrated into existing activities and initiatives;
- The activities will be in alignment with university imperatives and not as an imposition from the DHET;
- It will furthermore also be in alignment with DHET's imperatives including open learning;
- The activities are of seeding and catalysing nature, with elements of risk taking;
- Activities will focus on collaboration and the sharing of resources, experience and expertise;
- The programme seeks to build strong partnerships between the DHET, universities and TVET colleges, with the intention that such partnerships should enable sufficient numbers of quality lecturers to be trained;
- Focus have to be on sustainability of the outcomes of the project; and
- All materials, documents and resources developed will be made available as Open Educational Resources.

The main activities of the programme include:

- The capacity of the system to train TVET College lecturers in teaching and learning using effective OL modalities and pedagogies developed:
 - A national network of universities supporting open learning through sharing, capacity building and collaboration developed;
 - Institutional capacity developed to deliver programmes/courses in the proposed programme area;
 - A cadre of open learning materials/course developers in post school education and training be developed to continue the development of open learning materials for the open learning system; and

- Two programmes/courses for TVET College lecturers developed that are available on a National Open Learning System.
- Collecting and publishing of case studies on the application of open learning in post schooling that can be shared amongst institutions and countries, including:
 - Development of a conceptual framework of the envisaged case studies;
 - Development of young researchers to conduct the case studies; and
 - Publication and presentation of case studies; and
- Monitoring and evaluation activities for impact are an integral part of the project.

6. Development Imperatives with respect to Universities offering TVET College Lecturer Programmes

The development imperatives with respect to universities offering TVET College lecturer programmes were discussed and consideration was given to the project parameters and funding.

Recommendation:

It was proposed that OL crosscutting modules could be developed within two existing programmes, namely:

- Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Teaching, and
- Advanced Diploma in Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

Participants considered the question of how delivery of the programmes would be provided to the TVET College lecturer and how the course content would be delivered in an open environment. It was suggested that TVET college lecturers should also be developed as OL specialists.

It was further noted that the course materials developed for the TVET College lecturer programmes should be self-directed, learner-centered and of a high quality.

The DHET undertook to make all materials and resources developed during this project available as OER to all other universities and institutions.

Furthermore, due to time constraints at universities and limited number of staff appointed in this area, it was agreed that participating universities will be actively involved in project activities, will actively participate in capacity building activities, but will not be the primary content developers. They will participate as critical readers and reference group. The DHET will appoint a development team to do the work. The courses to be developed should be widely applicable, be part of more than one qualification and be ready for possible implementation during 2017.

Three modules were suggested for the first phase of development namely:

1. Being a Vocational Educator,
2. Assessment in Vocational Education, and
3. Vocational Pedagogies.

The DHET will appoint an independent service provider to adapt learning material, provided by institutions, for the OL environment. Institutions are free to tender for the work.

While the primary focus for the first year will be on the above activities, the DHET will also initiate the development of the conceptual framework of the envisaged case studies case studies and the development of research capacity in OL.

Possible research areas were identified as a) the OL implementation process b) the application of OL in PSET c) TVET college programme offerings and appropriate teaching methodologies.

7. Way Forward

The DHET undertook to identify development imperatives with respect to universities offering TVET college lecturer programmes by developing a high level project plan and sharing it with delegates. Activities around material development and the new delivery model will also be facilitated by the DHET.

It was agreed that more discussion was required to identify where support is needed for offering TVET college lecturer programmes and for capacitating institutions in delivering OL modalities.