

# Quality Assurance Toolkit

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## Distance Higher Education Institutions and Programmes

TRUST  
ACCESS  
INNOVATION  
COST EFFECTIVE  
FACULTY SATISFACTION  
STUDENT SATISFACTION  
LEARNING EFFECTIVENESS  
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT  
EXCELLENCE  
LEADERSHIP





# Quality Assurance Toolkit

*for*

## Distance Higher Education Institutions and Programmes



Distance Education  
Modernization Project



# COMMONWEALTH *of* LEARNING

*The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is an intergovernmental organisation created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies.*

 Commonwealth of Learning, 2009

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Quality Assurance Toolkit for Distance Higher Education Institutions and Programmes

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## FOREWORD

*The University system for tertiary education in Sri Lanka is state controlled with 15 national universities, (including the Open university) 16 institutes, and 3 campuses with the University Grants Commission as their apex body. Intake capacity of the university is limited to about 3% of the age cohort. Sri Lankan higher education system has failed to consolidate and build on the remarkable gains made in school education in terms of access and equity where primary enrolment is 96% and secondary enrollment is over 75%.*

*Driven by problems of access, equity, relevance and quality in higher education Government of Sri Lanka is seeking alternate forms of delivery to fulfill the demand for higher education and enhance tertiary enrollments. In attempting to address this, ADB assisted Distance Education Modernization Project (DEMP) was approved in June 2003 in the equivalent loan amount of US \$ 45 million with a counterpart funding from the Government of Sri Lanka. The Project aims at modernizing the post-secondary education system in the country, especially through the enhancement of on-line distance education and promotion of public-private partnership to reduce pressure on public sector enrollment through the establishment of National On-line Distance Education Network linked to a number of Access Centres with high bandwidth spread across the country. Such an intervention is expected to improve the underdeveloped human capital of the country and increase the quality of the human resource base and thereby contribute to poverty alleviation and to boost the growth of the economy.*

*The impact of DEMP inputs is triggering an educational paradigm where the instructional system in distance education is leapfrogging from the second generation of multimedia approach hitherto practiced in Sri Lanka to the 5th generation of flexi learning model, conventional universities transforming into dual mode universities, on-line distance education providers and programmes increasing from one to over twenty five and student enrollment rising very rapidly. As the number of Institutions launching on-line and distance education programmes is expected to increase further in the future quality assurance of such distance education programmes is crucial. Quality assurance framework, accreditation standards, guidelines and evaluation schemes for assessment and accreditation of distance higher education have been developed by DEMP.*

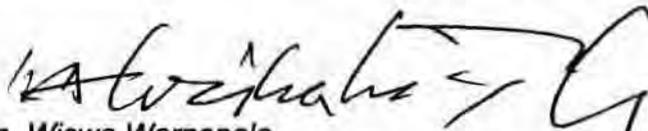
*An important tool that would contribute to sustenance as well as enhancement of quality, particularly which can help distance education institutions/programmes in self-appraisal for continuous improvement is Performance Indicators. Particularly the new providers in their formative stages can complete self assessment of their practices using these indicators on a continual basis leading to corrective actions at appropriate time and place. In order to develop a quality culture within the distance education providers by encouraging internal quality assessments DEMP in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) developed Performance Indicators for Quality Assurance of Distance Higher Education Institutions and for Programmes in Sri Lanka. The document was the outcome of a substantial development phase over two years with a wide range of inputs from the Open university of Sri Lanka, Conventional universities with external degree programmes, Quality Assurance committee of the University grants commission, Partner Institutions of DEMP, National and international consultants of DEMP and resource persons from Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, India and South Africa. The performance indicators developed are built on all principles which apply*

generally to higher education irrespective of the mode of delivery and level and relate those principles to distance learning provision.

The Standards and Performance Indicators developed for Sri Lanka were amended appropriately to make it internationally applicable at a Pre-PCF5 workshop with representations from Open Universities/Dual mode institutions in Canada, India, Jamaica, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, United Kingdom, Sri Lanka and UNESCO in 2008 by COL.

On behalf of DEMP I would like to acknowledge the President and staff of Commonwealth of Learning for the very productive partnership and for their goodwill and assistance in bringing out this publication and thank all the participants national and international, who actively participated in the workshops and virtual discussions and contributed immensely to the development of the toolkit.

I also thank the DEMP Director and the QA Consultant for steering this arduous task and integrating quality into all aspects of distance higher education at the inception stage of expansion of distance education in Sri Lanka. This toolkit would be of great value not only to Sri Lanka but to all developing countries.



Hon. Wiswa Warnapala  
Minister of Higher Education Sri Lanka

## PREFACE

The massification of higher education in many countries is placing tremendous pressure on higher education institutions (HEIs) to open up their doors to increasing numbers of students as demand for access to higher education soars. In response to this trend countries are turning increasingly to distance learning. The challenge for HEIs is to keep their virtual doors open while sustaining a culture of continuous improvement in their research, teaching and community engagement functions.

The Commonwealth of Learning is proud to partner with the Sri Lankan Ministry of Higher Education and UNESCO to produce this *Quality Assurance Toolkit for Distance Higher Education Institutions and Programmes*. The Toolkit has been prepared with three features.

First, it is a generic document on quality assurance, complete with a glossary of terms used in distance learning, for use across the Commonwealth. It accommodates various institutional solutions to reflect range of delivery methods used by distance education providers.

Second, it proposes performance indicators so that institutions can gauge their own performance trends, fostering continuous quality improvement in the spirit of a *culture of quality*.

Third, it provides *best practice* case studies from across the Commonwealth that can serve as exemplars as institutions consider their respective situations and options.

The performance indicators in the Toolkit were developed by the Distance Education Modernisation Project (DEMP) of Sri Lanka under the aegis of the Ministry of Higher Education in collaboration with COL, which brought together experts from twelve Commonwealth countries and UNESCO to develop international performance indicators.

COL will continue to provide assistance for capacity building in quality assurance in higher education institutions. We invite distance teaching institutions to use this toolkit in evaluating and improving their internal systems, policies, plans and programs. We welcome comments on lessons learned in using the toolkit.



Sir John Daniel  
President and CEO, Commonwealth of Learning



**MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR  
DISTANCE EDUCATION MODERNIZATION PROJECT (DEMP), SRI LANKA**

*The Government of Sri Lanka was progressive in planning a modern on-line higher education system for the country as an alternate path to increase access and equity in tertiary education. Project was initiated on the basis of a feasibility study conducted in 2000 by the Commonwealth of Learning, International, on the invitation of the Sri Lankan Government. In pursuance of the feasibility report Government signed an agreement in November 2003 with ADB to commence "Distance Education Modernization Project"(DEMP) of six year duration. The aim was to increase educational opportunities throughout Sri Lanka for secondary school graduates, support distance education through modern technologies and make available high quality educational programmes directly related to employment in the Public and Private Sector.*

*Through innovative and committed hard work by national and international Consultants of DEMP a unique, state owned technologically driven distributed on-line education system was created. Following the introduction of on-line educational programmes in 2007, Sri Lanka leapfrogged from second generation to fifth generation distance technologies. The Project is expanding to its full potential with a large number of distance education providers from both Public and private sector, numerous and diverse on-line programmes on offer and more student participation in online programmes.*

*With proliferation of distance education programmes the concerns and issues facing distance education in terms of quality come to the forefront. A milestone achieved by the Project was a 'home grown' quality assurance system of accreditation standards, performance indicators and evaluation criteria developed by the Quality Assurance (QA) Consultant for ensuring quality in distance higher education, through a very extensive substantial development phase of over two years (2005-2008) and with wide range of inputs from the Open University of Sri Lanka and national and international experts. The Sri Lankan document was internationalized by the Commonwealth of Learning in July 2008 to make it into a generic document applicable across Commonwealth countries and across various systems and levels. The Commonwealth of Learning and UNESCO further partnered with DEMP to extend the quality assurance tool to include a Glossary of Terms and a collection of case studies linked to performance indicators drawn out of best practices from across the Commonwealth to serve as exemplars for Institutions developing their quality assurance systems.*

*The internationalized Standards and Performance Indicators, collection of Case Studies of best practices and the Glossary are contained in the "Quality Assurance Toolkit" for Distance Higher Education published by the Commonwealth of Learning, DEMP Sri Lanka and UNESCO partnership.*

*DEMP is grateful to all who have contributed to this toolkit. Our sincere appreciation is due to Commonwealth of Learning and UNESCO for the valuable partnership that brings international recognition to the Sri Lankan quality standards.*



**N.S Abeywardane**



## **LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>CD-ROM</b>	- <i>Compact Disc Read Only Memory - Chief Executive Officer</i>
<b>CEO</b>	- <i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
<b>COL</b>	- <i>Commonwealth of Learning</i>
<b>DE</b>	- <i>Distance Education</i>
<b>DEMP</b>	- <i>Distance Education Modernization Project</i>
<b>DHE</b>	- <i>Distance Higher Education</i>
<b>HR</b>	- <i>Human Resource</i>
<b>ICT</b>	- <i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
<b>L3</b>	- <i>Lifelong Learning</i>
<b>MIS</b>	- <i>Management Information System</i>
<b>MOU</b>	- <i>Memorandum of Understanding</i>
<b>NAAC</b>	- <i>National Assessment and Accreditation Council</i>
<b>ODL</b>	- <i>Open and Distance Learning</i>
<b>OER</b>	- <i>Open Education Resource</i>
<b>PCF5</b>	- <i>Pan- Commonwealth Forum-5th</i>
<b>PI</b>	- <i>Performance Indicator</i>
<b>QA</b>	- <i>Quality Assurance</i>
<b>SMS</b>	- <i>Short Message Service</i>
<b>ToR</b>	- <i>Terms of Reference</i>
<b>UNESCO</b>	- <i>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</i>



## Section - I

# GUIDELINES FOR USE OF THE TOOLKIT



# INTRODUCTION

## *Background*

The ‘massification’ of higher education since the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been driven by increased internationalisation following the breakdown of political barriers, the advent of a free market economy, the rapid development of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and significantly increased demand. This rapid expansion of higher education opportunities together with the exponential growth of distance education and on-line education posed a threat to the quality of higher education in general. This in turn gave momentum to the development of the quality movement in higher education all over the world from the 1980s onwards.

The impact of ICTs has been to enable the development of the technology-based 5<sup>th</sup> generation (Taylor 2001) model of flexible and learner friendly distance education to replace earlier print-based and multi-media delivery modes. ICTs are also transforming conventional universities, as learning methods become more flexible and the convergence of face-to-face and distance modes of delivery enables them to operate as dual mode institutions. The availability of new technologies has resulted in the appearance of an increased number of private providers of higher education, both not-for-profit and for-profit, leading to increased diversity in the range of on-line programmes available (arts, pure and applied sciences, management, engineering and medicine), higher student numbers and an unprecedented heterogeneity of the student population. It has also fuelled an increase in distance and e-learning programmes offered by offshore educational providers using new ICTs.

Some stakeholders see the proliferation of Distance Education (DE) providers as a welcome relief. Others, while acknowledging the necessity of using DE to promote equity and access, perceive the unregulated growth as a threat to the quality of distance higher education. The overriding concern is to assure the quality of DE programmes and establish parity between DE and conventional educational delivery systems.

A common question raised in higher education circles is whether Quality Assurance (QA) in DE needs to be different from that of campus based conventional face-to-face education. DE challenges conventional quality assurance because of a broad range of organizational, pedagogical and methodological features which characterize it (Damme, 2002). As documented by several DE practitioners and reiterated by the World Bank (2002) “it is doubtful that the philosophy, principles and standards customarily applied in evaluating and

accrediting campus-based programmes can be used without major adjustments for assessing the quality and effectiveness of on-line courses and other modalities of distance education. Appropriate and reliable accreditation and evaluation processes are needed to assure the public that the courses, programmes and degrees offered by the new type of distance education institutions meet acceptable academic and professional standards”.

One of the main issues in education in Sri Lanka today is the tight bottleneck in post-secondary education which results in the lack of a robust pool of skilled graduates needed to develop the next generation of globally competitive human potential. As a response to this the Government of Sri Lanka has initiated the Asian Development Bank-funded Distance Education Modernization Project (DEMP). DEMP aims to enhance equity and access, to increase tertiary enrolment and to improve the quality and relevance of learning through on-line distance education in order to significantly improve the under-developed human capital of the country.

### ***Development of the QA Framework***

The impact of DEMP inputs is triggering an educational paradigm where the instructional system in distance education is leapfrogging directly from the multimedia approach to a flexi-learning model. At the same time, conventional universities are being transformed into dual mode universities and both on-line distance education providers and on-line learners are increasing exponentially. In its role as a capacity builder and promoter of access, equity, relevance and quality in distance higher education using high-end technology, DEMP is mandated to ensure that the distance higher education programmes and products in Sri Lanka are of high quality and consistently meet nationally agreed standards and withstand scrutiny against international benchmarks.

To address this mandate, DEMP reviewed and revised the “Framework for Quality Assurance in Open and Distance Learning in Sri Lanka” that had been developed by the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL 2006a; 2006b) in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). The project sought to devise quality assurance protocols which span the full range of distance delivery methods, from print based and face-to-face tutor-mediated to on-line learning, that would be sufficiently flexible to accommodate particular and individual institutional solutions in a contextually specific environment and adopt it as a national document. The Framework thus developed identified ten (10) ‘Key Areas’ or ‘Criteria’ which reflect the salient features of a distance higher education system and six (6) ‘Key Areas’ or ‘Criteria’ which identify the essential elements in offering

distance higher education programmes. The 'Criteria' were expanded into a number of specific 'Criteria Statements' which represent a distillation of good practice in the specific domain.

To enable their use for evaluation and accreditation, the 'Criteria Statements' in the Framework were transformed into 'Criteria Standards'. (Coomaraswamy, Uma and Abeywardena NS, 2007). The Framework thus provides a guide for Open Universities and other Distance Higher Education (DHE) providers on the optimal structural and procedural arrangements for quality assurance. When implemented it enables quality assurance to be embedded into a DHE provider's organizational structure, staff roles and process design, while allowing for flexible adaptations by each department/division/unit. The experience of Quality Assurance in face-to-face institutions suggests that external QA mechanisms are time consuming and not cost-effective. More relevant models for QA in DHE were therefore sought. Experience from across the Commonwealth suggested that guided self-assessment would be the most appropriate model, as it is the starting point for quality management and triggers continuous improvement and quality enhancement.

### ***Development of the Performance Indicators***

Over a period of more than two years, DEMP, in partnership with COL, developed Performance Indicators (PIs) as an important tool that would contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of quality by enabling Distance Higher Education Institutions to conduct structured self-appraisal for continuous quality improvement. The PIs were further debated and refined in a series of workshops and seminars organized jointly by DEMP and COL, attended by national and international distance education academics, senior managers of open and conventional universities and other public, private and professional distance higher education providers. To facilitate their application and use, Sources of Evidence and Performance Measures on a five-point scale were identified for each of the PIs (Coomaraswamy Uma, Kondapalli Rama and Abeywardena NS, 2008). Service Areas or Units within DHE institutions can complete a self-assessment of their practices using the PIs and take corrective actions as required. The objective is to embed quality assurance into all institutional activities from planning and design to implementation and to achieve institutional ownership of and commitment to a culture of quality that will lead to quality enhancement and institutional excellence.

As the work progressed, other international agencies and institutions were invited to share their experiences to add value to the ongoing PI development process. It became apparent

that many developing countries are facing challenges in assessing the quality of trans-border DE offered to their citizens. Following the success of the Quality Assurance Tool Kit for Teacher Education Institutions (NAAC-COL , 2008), COL realized the potential of the use of PIs for quality assessment and agreed to internationalise the PIs developed by Sri Lanka for use across the Commonwealth. The PIs were revised at a Pre-PCF5 workshop in July 2008 by a team of Distance Educators and Quality Assurance experts from Canada, Hong Kong, India, Jamaica, Malaysia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom and UNESCO to make them internationally applicable. The details of the PI tool are presented at Sections 2, 3 & 4 of this document.

The PIs were field-tested in a number of institutions to test their usefulness and applicability in different institutional contexts. The experiences are captured as case studies and presented at Section 5 of this document.

### ***Application of the Framework to Agriculture Education***

COL's mission focuses on helping Commonwealth member states to use ICT and ODL as a means of increasing the scope, scale, quality and impact of their education and training systems. Lifelong Learning for Farmers is one of the dimensions through which COL targets the alleviation of poverty and hunger. Through its Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3 Farmers) Project, COL is facilitating public-private-poor partnerships to empower farmers to gain control of their learning and development processes.

The PIs are generic statements that can be adapted for use by conventional systems, specialized areas in higher education or even other levels of education. The adaptability of the tool with appropriate modifications to a specialized discipline can be illustrated by its application to L3 Farmers.

COL hosted an interactive workshop in Colombo in September 2008 with experts in Agriculture Education and Livelihood Experience from Bangladesh, Canada, India, Kenya, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka and Uganda with the purpose of adapting the Standards and PIs to Agriculture in Higher Educational Institutions. The Standards and PIs for Agriculture Education are presented in Section 4 of this document. Best Practices Case studies are presented at Section 5 of this document.

A Glossary of terms used in the Standards, PIs and case studies is provided as Appendix 1

## ***Performance Indicators for Quality Assurance***

Most national quality assurance systems involve external monitoring and emphasise accountability rather than continuous improvement. The use of the PIs requires institutions to engage in critical self-assessment that promotes the development of a reflective culture of quality, which is particularly important within new and emerging ODL systems. Performance Indicators are tools to evaluate performance trends in the institution/programme/course and to initiate continuous improvement. In developing the PIs, care was taken to ensure that they would:

1. provide comprehensive coverage of the most relevant domains of quality in ODL institutions;
2. capture important aspects of performance;
3. impact on overall institutional/programme quality improvement;
4. reflect institutional realities;
5. focus on the impact of institutional processes on learners;
6. reflect key policy concerns;
7. make sense logically and in practice;
8. capture meaningful aspects of quality provisions;
9. be realistic and implementable.

The performance indicators are thus built on principles which apply generally to higher education, irrespective of mode and level, and relate those principles to distance learning provision. They are generic statements of good practice made in such a way that they ensure comprehensive coverage of the most relevant domains of quality in distance higher education institutions. Most of the performance indicators are a combination of inputs, processes and outcomes but are largely process based. They can be adapted for use by conventional systems and other levels of education.

## ***Structure of the Performance Indicators***

The performance indicators for distance higher education institutions are arranged under ten Criteria and those of programmes under six Criteria representing the various dimensions of practice. The scope of each Criterion is defined and expanded in a number of specific Criteria Standards. The criteria standards reflect best practice. A number of performance indicators have been developed for each Criteria Standard (Table 1, Table 2, Table 3).

**Table 1 – List of Criteria indicating the number of criteria standards and performance indicators for Institutions**

Criteria		Number of Criteria Standards	Number of performance indicators
1	Vision, mission and planning	21	54
2	Management, leadership and organizational culture	27	79
3	The learners	7	19
4	Human resource and development	7	22
5	Programme design and development	13	33
6	Course design and development	13	37
7	Learner support	15	49
8	Learner assessment	12	38
9	Infrastructure and learning resources	8	35
10	Research consultancy and extension services	7	20

**Table 2 – List of Criteria indicating the number of criteria standards and performance indicators for Programmes**

Criteria		Number of Criteria Standards	Number of performance indicators
1	Institutional planning and Management	33	97
2	Programme design and development	13	33
3	Course design and development	13	37
4	Infrastructure and learning resources	7	22
5	Learner support and Progression	15	49
6	Learner assessment and Evaluation	12	38

**Table 3 – List of Criteria indicating the number of criteria standards and performance indicators for Agriculture Education in Higher Education Institutions**

Criteria		Number of Criteria Standards	Number of performance indicators
1	Vision, mission and planning	21	64
2	Management, leadership and organizational culture	27	79
3	The learners	9	27
4	Human resource and development	7	22
5	Programme design and development	13	48
6	Course design and development	13	45
7	Learner support	17	54
8	Learner assessment	11	40
9	Infrastructure and learning resources	10	45
10	Research consultancy and extension services	8	26

To facilitate the application and use of the performance indicators, indicative sources of evidence (documents/records/interactions) are suggested to enable the institution to evaluate the process/activity against the Performance Measures and rate it on a five-point scale. The Performance Indicators and related details are provided in Section – 2 (Distance Higher Education Institutions) Section – 3 (Distance Higher Education Programmes) and Section -4 (Agriculture Education) of this document.

### ***Using the PIs as A Tool for Quality Assessment***

The PIs are designed to enable institutions to:

1. conduct a summative self-evaluation of the performance of their processes in order to make necessary adjustments and changes for quality improvement; and
2. monitor the processes for continuous learning and ongoing improvement.

In this way, the PIs can help to achieve uniform standards and guide institutional agendas to address more directly the requirements for quality provision and to meet the expressed needs of learners.

The PIs can be used for assessment of a specific practice or process within the distance education programme/institution; an entire programme; or the entire institution .

An institution may choose to conduct a comprehensive self-assessment against all the Criteria or select a particular one. The selected aspect could be a regular activity in the institution or an innovative practice. The first step is to collect data and information about the activity. The PIs will help in indicating the kinds of data to be recorded while implementing the activity. On the basis of the analysis of the collected data, the institution will be able to position its performance in respect of that aspect on a five point quality scale. This will enable the institution to evaluate its performance objectively and identify the areas where improvement is required. The systematic documentation of the institutional effort reveals the strengths and nuances in the institutional processes. The information collected is also useful to inform future implementation strategies.

Each institution has distinct characteristics that dictate which internal processes are appropriate at a given time. Over a period of time, each institution must develop its own specific performance indicators and these need to be dynamic, changing from time to time as the organization evolves.

The greatest advantage of the application of PIs in self-appraisal is that they can be amended to meet specific institutional requirements. This flexibility allows an institution to set its own targets to improve effectiveness and efficiency and achieve excellence in performance.

To be effective the PIs need to be understood and endorsed by the people and systems concerned. Hence, it is important that everyone involved in the activity under review is aware of the assessment process. To ensure that it has a wider acceptance, proper orientation and training on the PIs should be provided.

Any inaccuracy or inconsistency in the identification and definition of the PIs or the appropriate sources of evidence will become apparent when they are actually used for assessment of the processes. Thus there is a need to continuously analyse and research the PIs and their application for quality improvement in the particular context.

It is essential that a formal process of acting on results be in place. The data reflected through the application of a set of PIs should form the basis for planning continuous improvement.

The cross-referencing of varied perspectives is an important aspect of strategic planning. The application of the PIs for self-assessment across units / departments of the institution and the integration of the observations of the assessors in the final assessment ensures that a more accurate assessment of current institutional effectiveness and areas for improvement can be made.

Several of the PIs overlap. Institutions should examine the PIs covering various quality aspects and eliminate overlaps and duplications or merge the related PIs depending on the specific use and context.

### ***Procedure for Self-assessment***

The following procedure can be used to carry out the self-assessment of a distance education programme or institution against the criteria and standards in the framework.

Apply the PIs to the particular context and record the performance against each of the performance indicators after carefully and objectively analyzing evidence from the defined sources.

Performance on each PI can be rated on a five-point scale in which each level is given a numerical weighting (points) and a descriptor:

Fails to meet the Criteria	-	0
Unsatisfactory	-	1
Satisfactory	-	2
Good	-	3
Excellent	-	5

The result of the assessment is derived by totaling the points gained on all PIs.

The overall performance in each of the Criteria will be the sum of the points achieved on each related PI. When the focus is on a single Criteria standard, the total points achieved on all PIs within the selected Criteria standard should be counted. Similarly, when the total programme is being assessed, the total points on all PIs relating to the programme should be taken into consideration. The overall performance on all dimensions will be the positioning of the respective total score on a five point scale.

### ***Expected Benefits***

When used systematically, the PIs permit an institution to undertake a comprehensive investigation of organizational policy and performance, based on the analysis of extensive internal and external data, and identify institutional limitations and areas for improvement. They also provide an effective tool to monitor progress and initiate timely corrective measures.

By focusing on the key factors for success in DE, they provide guidance to institutional planners seeking to introduce new courses and programmes and assist in making objective judgements on the success and failure of particular initiatives.

The participation of staff from across the institution in the analysis of the processes and outcomes promotes a common understanding of and commitment to achieving institutional goals.

### ***Requirements for successful implementation***

Undertaking self-assessment against fixed quality criteria is a challenging activity for all institutions. It requires commitment from the top that weaknesses identified will be addressed; strong leadership from a designated champion with delegated authority and good communication skills; a high level of trust between management and staff; and good communication and coordination among and within academic and administrative units and functions.

Effective implementation of self-assessment against the criteria and standards using the PIs requires the institution to have an effective data collection and analysis capability both to conduct the initial assessment and to undertake continuous monitoring of the aspects and processes identified for improvement. Staff involved will need training in quality management concepts. Having identified areas for improvement, the institution must be prepared to deploy the appropriate human and financial resources to ensure effective implementation of necessary changes.

## ***Conclusions***

Every academic institution evolves its own functional modalities in its efforts to achieve its goals. These modalities represent the institution's characteristics and reflect the distinct environment in which it operates. The goals of ODL institutions are varied and multi-levelled. They may operate within a larger, national framework and have been established to meet the expectations of a wide range of stakeholders in terms of equity and access to higher education. Each of the stakeholder groups has a unique perspective on the institution's goals. At the functional level, the effectiveness of the ODL institution is reflected in the extent to which all these layers of goals mutually concur.

Achieving the full potential of a rapidly developing system in which several indigenous and innovative models have evolved, necessitates strengthening the processes and developing the concern for quality as a live feature at the level of the individual institution. Assuring the quality of the key features of ODL provision will not only provide a guarantee to the distance learner on the quality of the provision but also establish connections between various activities, thereby informing and improving practice. Such a process should be an integral part of the overall functioning of each institution. Thus, each institution needs to develop its own internal processes to build feedback and evaluation into all aspects of its functioning and make corrections when needed with a view to achieving quality enhancement.

By developing a self-assessment process using PIs we have sought to provide a tool that can help ODL institutions measure the strengths and weaknesses of their key processes against international benchmark standards and initiate improvements that are appropriate in their context.

The PIs provide a starting point for the development of uniform quality standards within national contexts and position ODL institutions and their agendas in such a way that they address more directly the quality of the programmes and courses they offer and the expressed needs of stakeholders across national borders.

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## Section II

# STANDARDS & PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



# Institutions



Criterion 1 - VISION, MISSION AND PLANNING

Scope - The institution determines its own mission and objectives that reflect its academic commitments and the needs of society.

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Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Evidence	Performance Measure
1.1 The institution has a stated vision and mission that is supported by specific and clearly defined goals and objectives within the context of national development priorities and the latest international trends in education.	1.1.1 The vision and mission are relevant to national development priorities.	The vision and mission statements; Corporate/Strategic Plan; handbook of the institution; governing board/academic board meeting minutes; planning policy, framework; involvement of staff in the university plans.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	1.1.2 The vision and mission reflect the latest international trends in education	The vision and mission statements; Corporate/Strategic Plan; handbook of the institution; governing board/academic board meeting minutes; planning policy, framework; involvement of staff in the university plans.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	1.1.3 The vision and mission are made known to all stakeholders.	Handbook, brochures; other advocacy materials of the institution; circulation to all stakeholders through minutes, website, materials etc., interaction with staff, students and other stakeholders.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	1.1.4 The specific goals and objectives are clearly defined and relevant to the institutional context.	Handbook; Corporate/Strategic Plan; brochures; programme information documents; website	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

1.2	The mission statement and objectives are regularly reviewed and revised by the institution.	1.2.1	The institution has a process in place for obtaining feedback from stakeholders.	Feedback forms; documented feedback information; database; interaction with stakeholders, data on workshops, minutes of various committees dealing with feedback processes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.2.2	The feedback is systematically analysed and made available to the senior institutional decision makers to make the necessary revisions to the objectives and plans of the institution.	Feedback forms, documented feedback information, interaction with stakeholders, data on workshops, minutes of meetings of various committees dealing with feedback processes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.2.3	The senior management reviews the activities of the institution and their appropriateness and assesses their alignment with the needs of the stakeholders and the institution's mission and objectives. It makes necessary changes wherever appropriate.	Agenda and minutes of management meetings; details of review meetings of management with staff; appraisal data forms; incidences of changes made; interaction with staff, students and other stakeholders.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.3	Policy statements and action plans to fulfill the stated mission are formulated for all operations and incorporated into the institutional Strategic Plan.	1.3.1	The institution has a Strategic Plan in place which provides a basis for all key activities of the institution.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; year planner; schedule of activities; minutes of statutory boards/committees; interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.3.2	The institution has a Strategic Plan which is appropriately aligned to the institutional vision and mission.	Strategic Plan/Corporate Plan, mission and vision documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

1.4	Policy and planning are supported by systematic institutional research	1.4.1	The institution assigns responsibility for conducting systematic research and evaluation of its performance and for communicating the results to senior management and key stakeholders.	Feedback forms and data; market surveys and data; minutes of policy planning units/committees, interaction with staff and employers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.4.2	The policies of the institution are based on and regularly reviewed in the light of the institutional research data.	Feedback from stakeholders; market surveys; institutional research; interaction with staff and students; policy development meeting minutes; policy documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.5	To achieve its stated objectives, the institution has systematic and transparent procedures for planning and development.	1.5.1	The planning process is clearly defined, fair and open to relevant stakeholders.	MIS, website, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.5.2	The institution ensures that the stakeholders are aware of the institution's objectives and of the role they are expected to play in achieving them.	Feedback documents; induction and orientation workshop data; advocacy material including prospectus and brochures.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.6	Relevant stakeholder groups are represented in the policy formulation process to encourage ownership and to facilitate feedback and openness.	1.6.1	The institution ensures wide representation of the stakeholders in all its decision making bodies.	Composition of institution committees and meeting minutes of the meetings; interactions with staff; interaction with students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.6.2	The institution adopts a participatory approach through a process of regular and continuous feedback loops with its stakeholders.	Data/information on feedback; regularity of feedback; agenda and minutes of policy development committees.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

1.7	Implementation plans of the institution are documented and effectively communicated to the relevant personnel.	1.7.1	Responsibility for implementation and operationalisation of institutional plans is clearly documented, defined and communicated to the relevant staff.	Operational plans of the institution; year planner, academic schedules, programme information package; internal delegation of powers, specified and communicated roles and responsibilities.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.7.2	Staff are briefed on the relevant plans and on their role in the implementation processes.	Documents specifying the roles and responsibilities of staff; documents pertaining to appointments and transfers and responsible authorities; policy manual; interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.8	There are monitoring procedures to ensure that the policies and plans of the institution are implemented, evaluated and improved from time to time	1.8.1	Internal mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the stated policies and plans are in place.	Strategic/Corporate Plan; year planner; annual report; minutes of executive and academic boards, planning and implementation policy, institutional monitoring and evaluation reports.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.8.2	The various data and information obtained through monitoring and evaluation are considered and reviewed by the senior management to initiate necessary improvements.	Strategic/Corporate Plan; year planner; annual report; minutes of executive and academic boards, planning/implementation policy, institutional practices. management committee meetings, minutes and agenda	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.9	The institution demonstrates its drive to develop itself into a Centre of Excellence and to maintain nationally and internationally comparable and acceptable standards.	1.9.1	The institutional plans and policies reflect national and international concerns.	Institutional plan; policy documents, interaction with management and senior staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.9.2	The institutional plans and policies are continuously updated to meet national and international requirements.	Institutional policy and plan documents; feedback documents; review and monitoring committee agenda and minutes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	1.9.3	The institution ensures quality and cost effective access to learners.	Institutional policy and plan documents; feedback documents; review and monitoring committee agenda and minutes and financial allocation documents; minutes of finance committee; interaction with staff and students, quality assurance plans; university equity plans.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
1.10	The institution's commitment to learners is documented and made available to all stakeholders.	1.10.1	The institution has clearly stated and documented procedures / processes reflecting its commitment to its learners.	Institution handbooks, prospectus, brochures, information package to students, website, advertisements, procedures documents, interaction with students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.10.2	The institution has clearly stated and documented processes for evaluating its achievements in terms of commitment to its learners.	Institution handbooks, prospectus, brochures, information package to students, website, advertisements, procedures documents and interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.10.3	The institution disseminates factual information on its commitment to learners.	Management Information System, website, circulars; special communication documents, minutes of meetings, evidence of circulation; interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.11	There are effective and appropriate appeal mechanisms for all constituents of the institution.	1.11.1	The institution has transparent appeal mechanisms and ensures timely, justified redressal of grievances.	Agenda and minutes of grievance and appeal committee; interaction with staff and students; efficiency of reporting and consequential action	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.11.2	The details of the appeal policies and procedures are readily accessible to all staff and learners.	Policy documents, prospectus, handbook, brochures, information package, bylaws, rules and regulations..	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

1.12 The institution's commitment to diversity and inclusion is reflected in its admission policy and learner profiles.	1.12.1 The institution publishes clear policies on the admission of local and overseas students.	Prospectus, student and mission details, market surveys, institutional research data, student profile, interaction with students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.12.2 The admission process is transparent and is made available for scrutiny by relevant stakeholders.	Prospectus, handbook, website, advertisements.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.12.3. The institution makes special provision to ensure equity and access to disadvantaged groups within its target student population.	Prospectus, institutional policy document, student handbook, student profiles, admission policy, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.13 The institution has a stated policy on partnerships and collaborations.	1.13.1 The institution has a clearly identified policy that provides the basis for collaborative relationships and partnerships involving public – private - governmental and non-governmental agencies for the development and delivery of quality programmes.	Policy documents, Memoranda of Understandings, Corporate/Strategic Plan, annual reports.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.13.2 There are specified criteria for establishing collaborations and partnerships and for monitoring and evaluating their effectiveness with reference to defined performance indicators.	Policy documents, Memoranda of Understandings, Corporate/Strategic Plan, annual report	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.14 The institution has a clear policy on ethical practices and ensures its implementation in all its activities.	1.14.1 The institution has a defined code of conduct and ethical standards for all levels of staff and activities	Documents specifying code of conduct, ethical standards, corporate plan, minutes of relevant committees, structure, prospectus, brochures, information package.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	1.14.2	Management, staff and learners are made aware of the defined code of conduct and ethical standards and adhere to it.	Interaction with staff and students, minutes of management committees	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	1.14.3	Violation of the code of conduct and ethical standards is viewed seriously and is supported by disciplinary action.	Interaction with staff and students, minutes of disciplinary committees.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	1.14.4	Procedures to initiate disciplinary action for violation of the code of conduct and ethical standards are well publicized and strictly adhered to.	Code of conduct, ethical standards, corporate plan, relevant committees, structures, prospectus, brochures, information package, minutes of disciplinary committees	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
1.15	The institution has a stated policy for financial support for enrolled students.	1.15.1	There is a clear and transparent policy for the administration of financial support to students, including scholarships, bursaries, fees and reimbursements.	Policy documents, brochure, prospectus, programme information package, financial statement, financial information systems.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.15.2	The institution monitors the implementation of the policy on financial support to students.	Expenditure statements, records of disbursements, financial information system, interaction with students and administrative staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.15.3	The institution regularly reviews the financial disbursements to students and takes necessary steps for timely disbursements.	Expenditure statements, records of disbursements, financial information system, interaction with students and administration staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.16	The institution has a stated policy with regard to quality assurance and monitoring in all aspects of its operations.	1.16.1	There is an integrated framework to ensure the quality of the academic and administrative activities of the institution.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; quality framework, agenda and minutes of relevant committees, quality circles, internal quality assurance teams, quality assurance procedures.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	1.16.2	There are clearly stipulated internal quality assurance processes for both administrative and academic activities.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; quality framework, agendas and minutes of relevant committees, quality circles, internal quality assurance teams, quality assurance procedures.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.16.3	Internal quality assurance mechanisms are aligned with the requirements of the relevant external quality assurance agencies.	Corporate Plan, Management Information System, website, internal circulars, Quality Assurance framework and Quality Assurance policy documents, interaction with staff and students, documents on external quality assurance agency.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.16.4	Quality assurance policies are effectively communicated to all the constituents of the institution.	Corporate Plan, Management Information System, website, internal circulars, Quality Assurance framework and Quality Assurance policy documents, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.17	1.17.1	The institution undertakes quality reviews/ audits at regular intervals and ensures the quality of all activities.	Corporate /Strategic Plan; institution plans, quality assurance committee structure and minutes of quality assurance committee meetings, interaction with staff, minutes of statutory boards, planning and implementation committee meeting minutes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.17.2	The institution constantly monitors and reviews the effectiveness of its quality assurance procedures. The outcomes are used to improve implementation strategies.	Corporate /Strategic Plan; institution plans, quality assurance committee structure and minutes of meetings, interaction with staff, minutes of statutory boards, planning and implementation committee meeting minutes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.17.3	The institution provides training to its staff for effective implementation of the quality assurance procedures.	Activity schedules, training modules, review documents, minutes and agendas of QA committee and staff committees; performance appraisal forms, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

1.18 The primary purpose of the institutions' quality assurance policy and procedures is to achieve quality enhancement	1.18.1 Quality enhancement is identified as a goal of the quality assurance policy	Quality Assurance plan and policy	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.18.2 Specific improvement targets are identified for each activity subjected to monitoring and review	Quality Assurance Framework	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.19 The institution has a policy for the effective use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in support of distance education.	1.19.1 The institution has provisions at various policy levels for the planning, acquisition, deployment, maintenance and use of appropriate technologies including the latest Information and Communication Technologies.	Policy documents, Corporate Plan, budget allocation documents, technology development plans, agendas and minutes of meetings of technology infrastructure and operational committees.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.19.2 There are procedures for monitoring the implementation of Information and Communication Technology policies.	Policy documents, Corporate Plan, budget allocation documents, technology development plans, agendas and minutes of meetings of technology infrastructure and operational committees.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.20 The institution provides timely, accurate and clear instructions regarding its credit transfer policies and practices.	1.20.1 There is an effective and accountable mechanism for the communication and dissemination of information about credit transfer policies and practices at all levels.	Prospectus, policy documents on credit transfers/exemptions, corporate /strategic plan, programme documents, course material package, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.20.2 There is efficient administrative and academic support for the implementation of the institution's credit transfer policies.	Organogram, policy documents, Corporate Strategic Plan, prospectus, minutes of credit transfer/exemption committee meetings.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

1.21 When the institution contracts to another agency, in part or full, the educational services of a distance learning programme, it takes steps to ensure the academic quality and integrity of all educational services offered in its name.	1.21.1 Quality management mechanisms are in place at the institution to ensure that the content offered by external providers is of good quality and meets the national and institutional quality criteria.	Quality Assurance Plans; Quality Assurance Committee documents; Corporate/Strategic Plan, Programme material, documented internal delegations and agency statements, documentation on staff and employees recruitment related to course development, course development, manuals and documentation on implementation.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.21.2 The institution has specified criteria for selecting partners and contractors. It also has established procedures to monitor and evaluate their services.	Corporate Plan Memoranda of Understandings, minutes of relevant review meetings, Monitoring Committees and Plans, Management Committee meeting minutes	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

Criterion 2 - MANAGEMENT, ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Scope - The institution should shoulder the responsibility of inculcating a desirable value system in all its constituents. The institution has clear and effective communication channels and has efficient resource management and administration systems that enable the institution to achieve its objectives. The institution is financially sound and can make reliable educational provision. In addition to using technology as a learning resource, the institution should manage its activities in a technology-enabled way for effective institutional functioning.

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Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
2.1 The organizational structure of the institution is appropriate for its operations.	2.1.1 The institution has an organisation chart with specified units and positions appropriate to its functions.	Organisation chart, Corporate/Strategic Plan, policy manuals, handbook, planning implementation policy/framework; documented internal delegation of powers, websites.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	2.1.2 The institution employs sufficient, appropriately qualified administrative, academic and technical staff to handle various specialized tasks and activities.	Human resource plan, Corporate/Strategic Plan, staff recruitment, promotion and development policy documents; cadre provision documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	2.1.3 The governance structure provides for collegial decision making and oversight of institutional activities and ensures the overall quality of the institutional provisions.	Organogram, Corporate/Strategic Plan, policy manuals, handbook, planning/ implementation policy/framework; documented internal delegations of powers and authority, websites, human resource plans, documented performance review and systems, efficiency of reporting and consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

2.2	The institution has a realistic academic calendar that is followed meticulously.	2.2.1	The institution plans its academic activities and prepares the academic calendar at the beginning of each academic year involving all units, divisions and departments.	Year planners, operational schedules, prospectus and brochures of academic programmes, learning and teaching plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.2.2	The academic calendar is made available to both students and staff of the institution at the beginning of the academic year.	Year planners, operational schedules, prospectus and brochures of academic programmes, learning and teaching plan and interaction with students, MIS, website.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.2.3	The institution assigns responsibility for monitoring the effective implementation of the academic calendar and for proposing mid-term corrections where required.	Committee structure and composition, terms of reference, agenda and minutes, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.3	The staff at senior management level possess appropriate qualifications and experience for their positions and roles.	2.3.1	The institution has stated criteria for the recruitment, retention and promotion of senior management staff.	Management Information System, recruitment, retention and promotion criteria, policy documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.3.2	The recruitment process is transparent and the institution ensures adherence to the stated criteria.	Management Information System, recruitment, retention and promotion criteria policy documents and interview policy and interaction with staff, documentation of selection committees, appeals by applicants.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.3.3	Senior management appointees exemplify the institution's commitment to ensure and maintain quality in all aspects and levels of recruitment.	Management committee records, annual report, leadership and reporting responsibilities, policy documents of the CEO and senior management, efficiency of reporting consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

2.4	The academic staff possess appropriate qualifications, skills and expertise for their positions , more specifically those related to Open and Distance Learning (ODL) .	2.4.1	The institution has stated criteria for the recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff.	Management Information System, recruitment, retention and promotion criteria policy documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.4.2	The recruitment process is transparent and the institution ensures adherence to the stated criteria.	Management Information System, recruitment, retention and promotion criteria policy documents	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.4.3	The selection and promotion criteria give preference to candidates with experience and expertise in various ODL activities such as course material preparation, distance tutoring, supervision, management of learning through distance.	Management committee records, annual report, leadership and reporting responsibilities, policy documents of the CEO and senior management, efficiency of reporting consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.5	The administrative staff possess appropriate qualifications and experience for their positions and roles.	2.5.1	The institution has stated criteria for recruitment, retention and promotion of administrative staff.	Management Information System, recruitment, retention and promotion criteria policy documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.5.2	The recruitment process is transparent and the institution ensures adherence to the stated criteria.	Management Information System, recruitment, retention and promotion criteria policy documents and interview policy and interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.5.3	The selection and promotion criteria give preference to candidates with experience and skills in various ODL activities.	Management committee records, annual report, leadership and reporting responsibilities, policy documents of the CEO and senior management, efficiency of reporting consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

2.6	There are clear lines of responsibility and accountability within the institution and the roles of staff are clearly spelt out.	2.6.1 The roles and responsibilities of the staff within the institution are clearly defined and every staff member is aware of his/her role and responsibilities through job descriptions and clear organization charts.	Human resource development document, documented internal delegations and service statements, staff roles and responsibilities documentation, codes of obligations and rights, documentation of performance review systems, work norms, job description and organizational charts.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.6.2 There are clearly defined work norms.	Human resource development document, documented internal delegations and service statements, staff roles and responsibilities documentation, codes of obligations and rights, documentation of performance review systems, work norms.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.6.3 There is a justified workload distribution based on the time required by the concerned staff to complete the various assigned tasks (contact hours, tutoring, supervision of tutors, assessment etc).	Work norms, performance and appraisal committee structure, Terms of Reference and minutes of meetings, appraisal forms and feedback methods; policies of self appraisal, interaction with staff and Chief Executive Officer of institution.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.6.4. There is an effective staff performance management and appraisal system which promotes the accountability and effectiveness of the staff in performing their activities.	Work norms, performance and appraisal committee structure, Terms of Reference and minutes of meetings, appraisal forms and feedback methods; policies of self appraisal, interaction with staff and Chief Executive Officer of institution.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

2.7	There are effective channels for communication with potential, current and past students, with key external organizations, and with all staff and tutors involved in the learning-teaching process.	2.7.1 The institution has a formal mechanism for obtaining feedback from students, staff and other stakeholders on the teaching-learning process.	Documented feedback mechanisms and plans; evidence of systems which achieve integration of feedback data from all stakeholders; surveys of stakeholder awareness and opinions; interaction with stakeholders.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.7.2 There are various channels of communication established to ensure a timely information flow and dialogue across various units and staff of the institution.	Management Information System, websites, interaction with stakeholders and documented feedback mechanisms and plans; evidence of systems which achieve integration of feedback data from all stakeholders; surveys of stakeholder awareness and opinions; e-mail and discussion forums, interaction with stakeholders.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.7.3 The institution has mechanisms in place for interaction among the staff.	Management Information System, websites, interaction with stakeholders, e-mail service and access.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.7.4 Clear channels of communication are established between current learners and the tutors and academic staff involved in the learning process	Operational Schedules; outreach centre activities; records of contact sessions.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.7.5 Relevant updated information on feedback received is made available to the stakeholders through print and electronic media.	Management Information System, websites, interaction with stakeholders and documented feedback mechanisms and plans; evidence of systems which achieve integration of feedback data from all stakeholders; surveys of stakeholder awareness and opinions; interaction with stakeholders.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

2.8	Enquiries and complaints are dealt with quickly, fairly and efficiently.	2.8.1	There is a mechanism to receive enquiries from stakeholders and provide correct and timely information.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, grievances and redressed committee structure and policy documents and minutes of meetings, minutes of management committee meetings.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.8.2	There is a mechanism to deal promptly with complaints received and provide timely redressal	Corporate/Strategic Plan, grievances and redressal committee structure and policy documents and minutes of meetings, minutes of management committee meetings, MIS, website, handbook.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.8.3	The composition, terms of reference and decisions of the grievance redressal entity are made known to all thereby ensuring the transparency of the process.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, grievances and redressal committee structure and policy documents and minutes of meetings, minutes of management committee meetings, MIS, website, handbook and interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.9	The enrolment procedures are clear and efficient and include provision for accurate, comprehensive and helpful information to prospective learners.	2.9.1	The information package of the institution is comprehensive, providing details of the facilities and support services available to the learners.	Handbook, Prospectus, brochures, programme/course information package, MIS, website, interaction with students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.9.2	Information to prospective learners includes details of admission requirements, the procedure for enrollment and the requirements for progression through the programme.	Handbook, Prospectus, brochures, programme/course information package, MIS, website, interaction with students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.9.3	Enrollment to the programmes is strictly in line with the specified norms and admission guidelines.	Handbook, Prospectus, brochures, programme/course information package, MIS, website, interaction with students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

2.10	The production and delivery of course materials are timely, relevant and quality assured.	2.10.1 The production of the course materials adheres to the agreed time lines.	Programme information brochures, faculty/academic board records and minutes, planning implementation policy/framework, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies and implementation strategies, activity schedules, minutes of programme theme meetings.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.10.2 The development of the course materials ensures compliance with the institutional quality standards.	Quality assurance plans; quality assurance committee documents; corporate/strategic plan, programme material, documented internal and external delegations and agency statements, documentation on staff and employees recruitment related to course development, course development, manuals and documentation on implementation.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.10.3 The institution has assigned the responsibility for assuring the quality of the course materials at various levels and stages of production and delivery to an appropriate body.	Committee structure and composition, terms of reference, agendas and minutes, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.11	There is a prompt response to the learners' needs for academic, administrative and personal support.	2.11.1 The institution provides support to learners through appropriately qualified staff.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, policy documents, evidence of student counselling centre/unit, its structure, functioning, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.11.2 The institution ensures the availability of appropriate academic, administrative and other instructional support for effective delivery of the programme	Documents on adequacy of staff; documents on qualifications of staff; documents on infrastructure facilities in the centre and outreach centres, evidence of technology applications.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	2.11.3	Learners can access personal counseling services.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, policy documents, evidence of student counselling centre/unit, its structure, functioning, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	2.11.4	The Counseling service provides just in time response for the distance learner	Corporate/Strategic Plan, policy documents, evidence of student counseling centre/unit, its structure, functioning, interaction with students and staff, access to on-line services.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.12 The assessment and evaluation system is reliable and ensures integrity.	2.12.1	The assessment process forms an integral part of teaching and learning and the analysis of assessment outcomes is used to inform curriculum improvements.	Policy documents, minutes of assessment boards/committees, course materials, teaching learning plans, curriculum development committee meetings.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	2.12.2	Information on the assessment of learning outcomes, assessment procedures and schedules is provided in all course modules / topics.	policy documents, minutes of assessment boards/committees, course material, teaching learning plans, curriculum development committee meetings and course materials, programme/course information package, website	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	2.12.3	A range of formative and summative evaluation methods are included to ensure that student learning is appropriately assessed.	Policy documents, minutes of assessment boards/committees, course material, teaching learning plans, curriculum development committee meetings and course materials, programme/course information package, website	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	2.12.4	The assessment systems are distance-learner friendly and have effective inbuilt procedures for assessing the achievement of intended learning outcomes.	Policy documents, minutes of assessment boards/committees, course material, teaching learning plans, curriculum development committee meetings and course materials, programme/course information package, website	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	2.12.5	The assessment strategies are designed and administered in such a manner that they encourage the distance learners to complete the courses.	Policy documents, minutes of assessment boards/committees, course material, teaching learning plans, curriculum development committee meetings and course materials, programme/course information package, website	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	2.12.6	There is a mechanism to ensure that complaints from the learners about the fairness of the assessment and formal appeals against assessment results are dealt with fairly and in a timely manner.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, grievance and redressal committee structure and policy documents and minutes of meetings, minutes of management committee meetings, MIS, website, handbook and interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
2.13	The institution has an effective system for the management and maintenance of equipment and facilities.	2.13.1	The institution has appropriate financial and administrative provision to ensure proper maintenance and operation of equipment and facilities.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, financial management information system, Management Information System, expenditure statements, minutes of maintenance and procurement committees, grievance and complaints committee documents and minutes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.13.2	There is adequate financial allocation for procurement, replacement, maintenance and upgrading of the technology and other equipment required for effective programme delivery.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, financial management information system, Management Information System, expenditure statements, minutes of maintenance and procurement committees, grievance and complaints committee documents and minutes. Information Communication Technology operational committee and minutes of meetings, Institution plan for use and maintenance of technology for teaching and learning.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.13.3	There are established procedures to take care of regular maintenance works and to handle emergencies.	Human resource plant, organogram, maintenance department/unit structure, roles and responsibilities of staff, minutes of meetings, interaction with staff and student.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

2.14	Appropriate training is provided to staff on the use and maintenance of new technology, equipment, facilities, and communication and information systems available/deployed in the Institution.	2.14.1 The Strategic Plan of the institution includes specified provision for staff development activities.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; staff development centre/unit plans, training schedules, training manuals, feedback on training programmes, training budget, interaction with staff.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		2.14.2 The institution conducts staff development programmes to improve the skills and competencies of the staff in handling the technology, equipment and facilities of the institution.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; staff development centre/unit plans, training schedules, training manuals, feedback on training programmes, training budget, interaction with staff.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		2.14.3 The budget allocation for the staff development programme is sufficient to provide in-house and off-site training opportunities for staff.	Financial information and management system, MIS, training budget allocations, staff development centre/unit/committee meeting minutes.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
2.15	The financial procedures are clearly stated and adhered to by the institution.	2.15.1 The institution's financial procedures comply with the requirements of national financial regulatory bodies.	Financial allocation to the institution, corporate/strategic plan, annual reports, audit reports, cash flow and balance sheets.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		2.15.2 There is a formally established body with designated responsibility for oversight of the institution's adherence to statutory requirements and for judicious use of available financial resources.	Financial allocation to the institution, Corporate/Strategic Plan, annual reports, audit reports, cash flow and balance sheets.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		2.15.3 The budget allocation process is transparent and ensures that all planned and approved activities can take place.	Financial allocation to the institution, Corporate/Strategic Plan, annual reports, audit reports, cash flow and balance sheets.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	2.15.4	The institution earmarks a specific budget allocation for the enhancement of the technology infrastructure required for quality teaching and learning and monitors its utilization.	Internal audit reports, auditor general's reports, annual reports, audit procedures, audit committee structure, roles and responsibilities and minutes of meetings.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
	2.15.5	The institution has an internal and external financial audit mechanism. Audits take place at regular intervals.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, grievance and redressal committee structure and policy documents and minutes of meetings, minutes of management committee meetings, MIS, website, handbook and interaction with staff and students.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
2.16	There is provision for financial assistance for needy learners.	2.16.1	The institution has clearly stated guidelines for providing scholarships ,bursaries , stipends and other financial assistance to learners.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, Prospectus, information package to students; website, bursary committee procedures, minutes of meetings, interaction with students.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		2.16.2	The institution secures funds to support needy learners.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, Prospectus, information package to students; website, bursary committee procedures, minutes of meetings, interaction with students.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		2.16.3	The institution ensures the effective and timely disbursement of the available financial aid / scholarships / bursaries etc. to the learners.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, Prospectus, information package to students; website, bursary committee procedures, minutes of meetings, interaction with students and interactions with students; financial statements of disbursement of bursaries/stipends.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
2.17	Provision is made in the budget to promote and enable constructive experimentation in the design of courses and delivery methods.	2.17.1	There is a budgetary provision for research and innovation in the design and delivery of academic programmes and courses by distance learning.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; financial information management system; financial allocation; research committee plans, minutes of meetings; review of research committee tasks	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	2.17.2	The research and development committee or any other appropriate body monitors research activities. Its terms of reference include resource mobilization and utilization and facilitation of networking and information flow among the various departments and units of the institution.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; research and development committee structure, roles and responsibilities of members, evidence of research review and feedback; annual reports.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
2.18	Staff are represented on governance structures.	2.18.1	Appropriate staff representation is mandated and secured on key governance committees.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; handbook, faculty brochures, management committee records, academic board records, interaction with staff, procedures for nomination and appointment to committees, by-laws.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.19	Appropriate learner representation is included in decision-making processes.	2.19.1	Participation and representation of learners in academic committee or any other appropriate body is mandated and secured.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; faculty brochures, academic committee records, annual report, interaction with students, procedures for nomination and appointment to committees, by-laws.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.19.2	The institution supports the establishment of student councils, subject associations and student committees and organizes workshops and training programmes to empower learners to contribute productively towards academic improvement.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; faculty brochures, academic committee records, annual report, interaction with students, procedures for nomination and appointment to committees, by-laws.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

2.20	There is an efficient and secure system for the administration and maintenance of learners' records over time.	2.20.1	There is a MIS in place which ensures that the documented records, personal information, assessment and evaluation results are securely stored and made accessible only to authorized persons.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; MIS; annual report; lines of authority for MIS access.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.20.2	Effective quality assurance arrangements are in place to ensure that the integrity of the student record is not compromised.	MIS, Prospectus, handbooks, information packages, feedback studies; interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.20.3	Learner records are regularly updated and made available without delay to authorized users.	MIS, Prospectus, handbooks, information packages, feedback studies; interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.21	The institution has a mechanism for constantly streamlining and improving its processes.	2.21.1	Quality assurance procedures are based on a continuous process of feedback, evaluation and improvement.	Feedback mechanisms documented, various committee/board minutes, performance review meeting minutes, evidence of consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.22	Mechanisms are in place to ensure effective coordination among different institutional constituencies.	2.22.1	Committee membership is designed to secure appropriate representation of relevant constituencies in decision making processes.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; handbook, faculty brochures, management committee records, academic board records, interaction with staff, procedures for nomination and appointment to committees, by-laws.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.22.2	There is a formal mechanism for liaison between committees to ensure proper coordination and dissemination of information among the various constituencies of the institution.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; handbook, faculty brochures, management committee records, academic board records, interaction with staff, procedures for nomination and appointment to committees, by-laws and all committee meeting minutes, evidence of consequential actions, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	2.22.3	There are established channels of communication so that issues discussed in committees are communicated to the senior management for appropriate decision.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; handbook, faculty brochures, management committee records, academic board records, interaction with staff, procedures for nomination and appointment to committees, by-laws and all committee meeting minutes, evidence of consequential actions, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
2.23	The institution encourages innovation and creativity among different constituents.	2.23.1	The institution's policies and resource allocation procedures encourage innovation and creativity.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; policy documents; research committee meeting minutes; management committee meeting minutes; rewards/awards committee meeting minutes; budgetary allocations, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.23.2	The institution recognizes the good work done by the staff through incentives, , rewards, special awards and monetary grants.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; policy documents; research committee meeting minutes; management committee meeting minutes; rewards/awards committee meeting minutes; budgetary allocations, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.24	The institution has activities to promote social harmony.	2.24.1	Institutional activities reflect national social justice priorities through inclusion in the curriculum of gender issues, social harmony, human rights, values and ethics.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; policy documents, curriculum, website, interaction with staff and students, course materials.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.24.2	The curriculum includes good citizenship and promotes the holistic development of the learner.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; policy documents, curriculum, website, interaction with staff and students, course materials.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.24.3	The institution engages in community outreach activities.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, records of outreach activities and impact.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

2.25	The institution has a statement on 'core values' and mechanisms to ensure adherence to it by all its constituents.	2.25.1 The institution's defined codes of conduct and ethical standards are strictly adhered to by all students and staff.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; policy documents, defined codes of conduct, by-laws, rules and regulations, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.25.2 Violations of the code of conduct and ethical standards are viewed seriously by the institution and action initiated.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; policy documents, defined codes of conduct, by-laws, rules and regulations, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.26	The institution has mechanisms to promote interpersonal relationships among key players.	2.26.1 The institution promotes harmonious relationships between key players by providing regular opportunities for communication and by facilitating opportunities for social interaction.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; whole-of- institutions practices, statistics of e-mail access, surveys of staff, student and key stakeholders awareness and opinions.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.27	The institution encourages collaborative relationship for its activities	2.27.1 In case of shared facilities the institution adheres to the specific terms of reference (ToRs) and/or the MOUs.	Policy documents, MOUs between institution and other agencies; ToRs; interaction with students, administrative staff and external providers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.27.2 In programmes delivered collaboratively responsibility for performance remains with the institution that confers degree/diploma/certificate.	Policy documents, MOUs between institution and other agencies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>



Criterion 3 - THE LEARNERS

Scope - There is a system of collecting detailed information about learners and using this information to inform all aspects of policy and planning, programme and course development, support services, and the overall processes of teaching - learning.

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Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
3.1 Entry requirements and other prerequisites for programmes and courses are clearly specified prior to entry so that selection of programmes or courses is relevant and meaningful to the student community.	3.1.1 The institution clearly states course requirements, prior knowledge and skills required for pursuing the course, resource implications, time schedules, access to media and technology, success and dropout rates of past students to enable prospective learners to make an informed choice.	Handbook, Faculty Prospectus, programme/course information package, brochures, website, other advocacy material including advertisements; interaction with students; documentation on student performance.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	3.1.2 The institution strictly adheres to advertised admission requirements.	Documents relating to admissions.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.2 There is an up-to-date and integrated database about learners providing information on demographics, language, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic and educational backgrounds and special needs. The confidentiality of data is maintained.	3.2.1 The institution has a comprehensive data base of learner profiles which is updated at regular intervals.	MIS, student profiles.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	3.2.2	Appropriate security measures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of personal data.	Procedures and practices of record management, management of MIS, code of conduct and ethical standards, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	3.2.3	The institution has policies and procedures in place to ensure that only authorized personnel have access to students' personal data.	Procedures and practices of record management, management of MIS, code of conduct and ethical standards, interaction with staff and students. policy documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.3	3.3.1	The institution reviews and analyses the data on learner profiles, needs and expectations.	Documentation on programme/course development process, house style/other relevant manuals; need analysis questionnaire and documented feedback data; meeting minutes of institutional research committees; interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
				<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.4	3.4.1	The institution obtains formal and informal feedback from learners at regular intervals on the efficiency and effectiveness of its processes.	Stakeholder analysis feedback forms; database; documentation on workshops/meetings with outcomes; evidence of consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
				<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	3.4.2	The results of the feedback obtained from learners feed into the decision making and planning of its programmes.	Stakeholder analysis feedback forms; database; documentation on workshops/meetings with outcomes; evidence of consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.5 The institution is aware of and responds to disabled learners including those with specific learning difficulties	3.5.1	The institution's admission policy has adequate provision for admitting disabled learners and fosters inclusiveness.	Stakeholder analysis feedback forms; database; documentation on workshops/meetings with outcomes; evidence of consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	3.5.2	The different facilities at the institution and the programmes offered have provision to cater to students with special learning difficulties.	Corporate plan; documentation on available infrastructure facilities, MIS, programme information package, brochures, prospectus, website, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.6 Academic staff have access to relevant information about learners.	3.6.1	The institution maintains a database of students enrolled in the institution and the profiles are regularly updated.	MIS, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	3.6.2	The Management Information System (MIS) of the institution enables the academic staff to access relevant student information and use it for guidance and counselling as well as for performance improvement.	MIS, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.7 The institution has mechanisms to maintain and monitor close links with learners.	3.7.1	Teacher and learner interaction is facilitated through formal contact sessions and tutor feedback on assignments.	Prospectus, faculty brochures, programme/course information package, interaction with staff and students, feedback forms and evidence of consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	<p>3.7.2 The institution has a clear understanding of the technology profile of the learners to optimize communication between learners and the institution.</p>	MIS; Learner Profile	<p><b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
	<p>3.7.3 The institution uses available technology ( e.g. internet, yahoo groups, e-mail communications, mobile phones ) to communicate with the learners on a continuous basis.</p>	Website, e-mail provision for students/teachers sample, MIS, guidelines to students, technology facilities and evidence of access, budget allocations.	<p><b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
	<p>3.7.4 The institution facilitates and provides for social interaction through approved student societies.</p>	Handbook, corporate/strategic plan, constitutions of approved societies, interaction with students, establishment and support for approved societies.	<p><b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
	<p>3.7.5 Staff are accessible to the learners through a range of services (e.g. e-mails, teleconferencing, SMS, telephone, chat, yahoo or other internet groups, discussion forums). Response time to student enquiries is mandated and minimal.</p>	Website, e-mail provision for students/teachers sample, MIS, guidelines to students, technology facilities and evidence of access, budget allocations.	<p><b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
	<p>3.7.6 The institution keeps track of the use of technology for communication between teachers and learners to ensure that the learners' interests are well served.</p>	Website, e-mail provision for students/teachers sample, MIS, guidelines to students, technology facilities and evidence of access, budget allocations.	<p><b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>

Criterion 4 - HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Scope - The human resource provision is appropriate for the education and training services provided. The institution offers development programmes that equip the personnel to perform their tasks effectively.

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Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
4.1 Sufficient, qualified and skilled academic, staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for the learners.	4.1.1 Human resource planning forms an integral part of programme and course development.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	4.1.2 The institution ensures the recruitment of sufficient suitably qualified academic staff	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	4.1.3 The institution maintains the student/teacher ratios at the planned level and conforms to the standards of the regulatory agencies.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles, MIS, national/accreditation agency norms.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	4.1.4	The institutional human resource plan lays emphasis on providing adequate numbers of teaching staff and staff at the tutoring level to meet the needs of the students.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles, MIS.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	4.1.5	The institution provides teaching development programmes at regular intervals to improve the skills and knowledge of teaching and tutoring staff.	Staff Development training Plan; trainees; feedback	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
4.2	Sufficient, qualified and experienced administrative staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for the learners.	4.2.1	Planned administrative staff strength is sufficient to coordinate and supervise the various activities of the institution.	Organogram, Corporate/Strategic Plan, details of staffing structure of administration unit, individual staff profiles of admin unit; institution planning and HR documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		4.2.2	The institution ensures that the administrative staff employed have the relevant skills and experience to deal with the learners and academic and other staff, of the institution and its outreach centres.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles, staff training and development schedules and manuals; interaction with staff, performance appraisal forms feedback.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
4.3	Sufficient, qualified technical and support staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for student learning.	4.3.1	The institution employs sufficient qualified and experienced support and technical staff to support the delivery of programmes and courses to learners.	Organogram, Corporate/Strategic Plan, details of staffing structure of administration unit, individual staff profiles of admin unit; institution planning and HR documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	4.3.2	The institution ensures that the support and technical staff employed have the required qualifications, skills and experience to handle specialized tasks.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles, staff training and development schedules and manuals; interaction with staff, performance appraisal forms feedback.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	4.3.3	The institution provides training at regular intervals to improve the skills and knowledge of technical and support staff.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles, staff training and development schedules and manuals; interaction with staff, performance appraisal forms feedback.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
4.4	The responsibilities and job descriptions of staff are clearly specified and respond to the learning needs of the students enrolled in the programme.	4.4.1	Duties, responsibilities and workload of all categories of staff are clearly specified in job descriptions.	University planning and HR documents, individual staff profiles, university policies and reporting procedures, especially those for staff appraisal counseling, development and monitoring, job descriptions of staff, programme descriptions.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		4.4.2	The workload of staff conforms to the work norms agreed upon by the institution.	Work norms and job descriptions of staff; individual staff profiles, performance appraisal data.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		4.4.3	Functional responsibilities of individual staff with regard to course development, course delivery, counseling, assessment, tutorial support, monitoring and management and administration of the system are clearly specified and communicated to all staff.	Learning and teaching plan; curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, roles and responsibilities of staff; promotion and reward systems for staff; documentation of arrangements for teaching support; academic boards and review process, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

4.5	Quality of performance is recognized for selection and promotion of all categories of staff.	4.5.1	The institution evaluates the performance of the staff at regular intervals through annual self appraisal reports, confidential reports and learner feedback on courses and teaching.	Student and staff comment through questionnaires, focus groups, structured telephone interviews, annual appraisal reports, confidential reports, staff service records, agenda and minutes of performance review committees	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		4.5.2	The outcomes of performance evaluation are communicated to and discussed with the staff concerned with the aim of improving their performance.	Student and staff feedback questionnaires, focus groups, structured telephone interviews, annual appraisal reports, confidential reports, staff service records, agenda and minutes of performance review committees	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		4.5.3	The institution provides training and staff development programmes to improve the performance of the staff and contribute to their continuous development..	HR development plan, training schedules and manuals; feedback data on evaluation of training workshop, performance review after training, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		4.5.4	The institution has a scheme for rewarding good performance by providing incentives, promotions, rewards, special benefits, research grants, and sponsorship..	Institutional planning and HR documents particularly policies for promotion, reward, tenure and performance management, minutes of management committee meetings, budget allocations, awards given.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
4.6	There is an effective human resource development system to train, retain and motivate the employees for the roles and tasks they	4.6.1	Training is provided to all categories of staff in all aspects of the application of new technologies.	HR policy documents; technology policy documents; technology committee meeting minutes, training in technology data and manual, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	4.6.2	There is provision for training and retraining staff at frequent intervals in the use of equipment, facilities, and new technologies.	HR policy documents; technology policy documents; technology committee meeting minutes, training in technology data and manual, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
4.7	4.7.1	Conditions of service include welfare provision that responds to employee's needs and is in line with market norms.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; policy documents, ordinance, act, service conditions, budgetary allocations, employer/employee union constitutions, roles and responsibilities of welfare unit staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	4.7.2	There is a designated welfare officer or unit to coordinate and monitor implementation of the various welfare schemes for staff.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; policy documents, ordinance, act, service conditions, budgetary allocations, employer/employee union constitutions, roles and responsibilities of welfare unit staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	4.7.3	There is a well-documented mechanism for staff grievance redressal.	Corporate/strategic plan; policy documents, ordinance, act, service conditions, budgetary allocations, employer/employee union constitutions, roles and responsibilities of welfare unit staff, evidence of implementation of the mechanism.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>



Criterion 5 - PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Scope - Programmes are designed and developed to meet the needs of learners, employers and society; to encourage access to quality education; assessment methods effectively test and measure students' achievement of the stated learning outcomes of the programme.

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Criteria Standards		Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
5.1	The programmes of the institution reflect the institutional mission, goals and objectives	5.1.1 The offer of programmes is determined in response to national needs and reflects global trends.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme design and development plans, interaction with students and staff, minutes of programme development committee.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		5.1.2 Programmes offered are responsive to changing market needs and designed to achieve the institution's mission.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme design and development plans, interaction with students and staff, minutes of programme development committee.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
5.2	The programme objectives are clearly defined and focus on the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills and their application in professional practice where applicable.	5.2.1 The programmes' stated objectives focus on the needs of the nation, prospective learners, employers and the community.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme objectives, programme materials, Handbook, academic information package, need survey analysis; employer surveys, institutional learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	5.2.2	The objectives of each programme exhibit a clear relationship between the learners' needs (such as entry level skills, knowledge and experience and credit transfers ) and the media and technology and other facilities and services available to support delivery	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme objectives, programme materials, Handbook, academic information package, need survey analysis; employer surveys, institutional learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.2.3	When a programme is aimed at a particular type of occupation or vocation, the objectives of the programme clearly state the type of occupation or vocation and the knowledge, attitudes and skills to be developed during the programme.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme objectives, programme materials, Handbook, academic information package, need survey analysis; employer surveys, institutional learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.3	There are clear processes and procedures for programme development and institutional approval.	5.3.1	The procedures for programme development and approval are clearly specified and meet the requirements of the accrediting authorities.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.3.2	The programme development and approval process involves scrutiny by internal and external peers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.4	Programmes are designed and developed taking into consideration the learners' needs and the resources available to them.	5.4.1	The programmes are developed keeping in view the needs, resources, learning styles , preferences, skills and knowledge base of the learners at the entry level	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	5.4.2	The programme structure is based on a careful analysis of the availability of the appropriate technologies, the learning environment of students and external accreditation requirements.	Institution's teaching and learning plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, academic boards and academic review process, need survey analysis data, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
5.5	Programmes are developed and modified in consultation with relevant industry and professional bodies and display sensitivity to changes in social and market demands.	5.5.1	The programmes are developed based on a needs analysis exercise including market research, liaison with industry, review of national priorities and professional needs and reflect the latest developments and practices in the field of study.	Institution's teaching and learning plan, curriculum, course development and accreditation policies, academic boards and academic review process, needs survey data, interaction with staff and students, learning and teaching plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.5.2	The institution has mandated mechanisms for review and modification of its programmes in consultation with relevant stakeholders such as employers, industry, education sector, professional bodies, the community, staff and learners .	Learning and teaching plan, academic review processes, employer and stakeholder surveys.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.6	The academic standard of the programmes is appropriate to the level and nature of the award.	5.6.1	The curriculum (expected outcomes, content, teaching and learning strategies and assessment methods of the programme) matches the standards and benchmarks established by national bodies (e.g. accreditation agencies, academic, professional and vocational bodies).	Benchmark statements, learning and teaching plan, accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	5.6.2	The expected outcomes, the content, teaching and learning strategies and assessment methods of the programme are aligned and appropriate to the award and objectives of the programme.	Benchmark statements, learning and teaching plan, accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
5.7	Access to programmes is as open as possible with flexible entry and exit points where applicable.	5.7.1	The access and entry requirements for the programme are open to the extent possible with appropriate recognition for prior knowledge and experience.	Curriculum and programme development and accreditation policies, credit exemption and transfer policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.7.2	Programmes offered by open entry system institutions provide additional academic support to under – prepared learners (e.g. through bridging courses, additional course inputs and increased contact sessions including special sessions for optimizing the use of ICTs).	Institution's documentation of arrangements for teaching support, academic review processes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.7.3	The programme structure is flexible and allows for and encourages lateral entry and exit that leads to progression to higher levels and enables programme diversification.	Institution's documentation of arrangements for teaching support, academic review processes and student data collections, course experience questionnaire, etc.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

5.8	The programmes provide information for learners which includes a description of the aims, objectives and learning outcomes, target groups, teaching-learning processes, means of delivery, support services, scheme of assessment, credit and time requirements.	5.8.1	The Institution provides clear information about its programmes (via its web-site, the media, prospectus and information days) to all prospective learners.	.Prospectus; Handbook; programme information package; web-site	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.8.2	The institution provides an updated and comprehensive overview of the programme (e.g. aims and objectives , learning outcomes, teaching, learning and delivery processes, support services, schedule of assessment, term requirements, credit transfers and award requirements) to all registered students at the beginning of the academic sessions	Prospectus, Handbook, programme information package, website, interaction with students, student comments through questionnaire	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.8.3	The Prospectus and Student Handbook are easily accessible to all intended users both off-line and on-line.	Prospectus, Handbook, programme information package, website, interaction with students, student comments through questionnaire.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.9	The Programme curriculum reflects current knowledge and practice and is sufficiently comprehensive for learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes..	5.9.1	The content of the programme is up-to-date and reflects current knowledge and practice.	Learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation documents, documents of arrangements for teaching support, academic review processes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	5.9.2	The teaching and learning and assessment strategies of the programme are structured to facilitate the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.	Programme/Course Design & Development documents	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
5.10	Programme design and development pays attention to gender equity, multiculturalism, social justice and cohesion, ethical values and environmental sustainability.	5.10.1	Issues of national and global priority such as gender, equity, inclusion, diversity, environment, social justice values and ethics are integrated into the curriculum.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme objectives, programme materials, handbook, academic information package, need survey analysis; employer surveys, institution learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.10.2	Where appropriate, credit bearing activities based on issues such as gender, equity, ethics and values, human rights and social justice are incorporated in the programme.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme objectives, programme materials, Handbook, academic information package, need survey analysis; employer surveys, institution learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.11	The programmes provide sufficient flexibility for learner choices in the courses.	5.11.1	Sufficient elective courses from outside the major discipline are available for learners to choose a pathway through the programme that meets their needs.	Learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies and documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.11.2	The interdisciplinary approach to programme design also makes possible the lateral movement of the learners to other programmes at various levels.	Institutional learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies and documents, corporate plan, handbook, admission and enrollment policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

5.12 The programmes are evaluated on the basis of the learners' achievement of the intended learning outcomes.	5.12.1 Programme evaluation and monitoring is undertaken at regular intervals.	Learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, documentation of arrangements for teaching support, academic review policies, good practices statements.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.12.2 There is a regular and structured feedback mechanism in place to obtain feedback from learners, teachers, employers and the community about the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its objectives	Academic review processes, good practice statements, feedback forms, database, data on focus group discussions and workshops.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.12.3 The feedback from the learners and employers, as well as application and registration data, student assessment results and graduate employment outcomes form the basis of the evaluation of programme performance against its stated objectives.	Learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, documentation of arrangements for teaching support, academic review policies, good practice statements. Surveys of students and employers' opinions of attitudes and responsiveness, student and employer comments through questionnaires.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.12.4 The outcomes of the evaluation are used to make necessary changes and improvements to programme design and delivery.	Learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, documentation of arrangements for teaching support, academic review policies, good practice statements. surveys of students and employers' opinions of attitudes and responsiveness, student and employer comments through questionnaire. evidence of incorporation of the feedback, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

5.13	Learner satisfaction relative to the quality of education and training provided in the programmes is regularly evaluated.	5.13.1 The institution has a mechanism to survey learner satisfaction rates with reference to the service providers, the programme delivery and the commitment of the institution to meeting the learners' needs.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, means of tapping student and staff opinion, data from test audits of student administration, surveys of student opinions of student services, documents reporting the efficiency of student services, corporate/strategic plan, programme/course experience questionnaire data.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.13.2 The survey of learner satisfaction levels is conducted at regular intervals in a transparent manner.	Means of tapping student and staff opinion, data from test audits of student administration, surveys of student opinions of student services, documents reporting the efficiency of student services, corporate/strategic plan, programme/course experience questionnaire data, procedure used for surveys.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.13.3 The outcomes of the learner satisfaction surveys are considered positively, recorded appropriately and used promptly to improve the programme.	Means of tapping student and staff opinion, data from test audits of student administration, surveys of student opinions of student services, documents reporting the efficiency of student services, corporate/strategic plan, programme/course experience questionnaire data.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.13.4 The institution promptly informs staff and learners of the outcomes of the survey and the actions taken in response to feedback received.	Documentation on communication of information to staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

Criterion 6 - COURSE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Scope - A course is a component of a broader programme of study. The course content is underpinned by research. The course material clearly presents objectives and learning outcomes, content, approaches to teaching-learning and assessment and learner support. There is an identified process of development and review of courses.

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Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
6.1 The courses are designed according to the stated programme objectives.	6.1.1 Course design is focused on national and international priorities and trends and the needs of prospective learners and employers.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff, professional accrediting bodies, governments, and employers.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	6.1.2 Courses reflect current developments and knowledge in the relevant field of study.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and employers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	6.1.3 The design of individual courses contributes to achieving the overall programme objectives.	Programme and course objectives and course materials.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

6.2	Course design takes into consideration and incorporates recent advances in ICT.	6.2.1	The choice of media and the technology to be used is appropriately integrated in the course design.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers. Course team includes IT personnel.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.2.2	The choice of media and technology takes into account the range of media and infrastructural support that the institution can make available to its learners.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, Discussion with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.2.3	Course design reflects institutional policy on ICT for learning.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, Corporate Plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.2.4	There is a visible link between learners' needs and the features of the technology selected for course delivery which is aimed at motivating the learners in the use of that technology.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers. Findings of need surveys and student feedback	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
6.3	Courses are designed based on learner-centered principles .	6.3.1	Teaching/learning strategies to be employed, teaching methods, learner activities, use of appropriate ICTs and contact sessions are determined as part of the course design process	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students and staff, observation of contact sessions.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	6.3.2	The teaching/learning methods are consciously planned and monitored keeping in view different learner abilities and needs.	Course materials, information package, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	6.3.3	The teaching/learning strategies are clearly stated in the course book and communicated and discussed with the learners.	Course materials, information package, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
6.4	6.4.1	The course has ample scope for encouraging and developing creative and critical thinking, independent and lifelong learning and interpersonal communication and team work skills.	Learning activities are designed to contribute to the development of the specified generic skills	Course materials, information package, assessment and evaluation scheme, assignments and question papers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
6.5	6.5.1	Standard formats for instructional design and development are in place and are followed.	Templates are designed and developed for effective instructional design and efficient course development.	Course templates and course materials.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	6.5.2	The institution provides prior training and necessary inputs to the staff involved in instructional design and development.	Minutes for the course planning and course design committees, interaction with staff and course developers, training materials and feedback data.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	6.5.3	The institution adheres to the agreed formalities and templates to be used for instructional design and development.	Minutes for the course planning and course design committees, Course materials.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	

6.6	Instructional design recognizes diversity of learners' learning contexts and learning styles, and ensures realistic scheduling of activities.	6.6.1	The instructional design template requires the use of inclusive language and provides a variety of activities that accommodate different learning styles, circumstances and preferences.	Course materials, information package, interaction with students, staff and course developers, research studies on student feedback.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.6.2	Scheduling of activities addresses the needs of distance learners and their access to technology and other facilities.	Course materials, information package, year planner, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
6.7	The course development process incorporates a range of relevant expertise.	6.7.1	Courses are developed with contributions from experts in the academic subject area, in instructional design and in course delivery.	Course materials, information package, year planning, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.7.2	Course development is based on a plan that details the processes, timelines, finance, infrastructural requirements, resources and roles and responsibilities of people involved.	Minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with staff and course developers, training materials and feedback data.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
6.8	Instructional design includes assessment of learning against stated learning outcomes	6.8.1	Learning outcomes are clearly stated. Assessment is designed to measure achievement of learning outcomes in terms of defined criteria.	Course materials, information package, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers. Results of development testing.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

6.9	Course design uses appropriate technology to engage and support learners and to provide communication facilities.	6.9.1	Appropriate technology is used to engage and support learners	Technology profiles of the institutions, stock books, user records, information packages or brochures, interaction with teachers, staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.9.2	Communication with learners uses the technologies that are most accessible to the learners such as the internet, mobile phone, telephone, television and radio.	Technology profiles of the institutions, stock books, user records, information packages or brochures, interaction with teachers, staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.9.3	The institution analyses the ease of use and level of technology available to the learners.	Feedback of students, students' profiles including access to technology, institutional data base, interaction with students and teachers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

6.10	A complete instructional package includes course description, syllabus, course plans, learning outcomes, details of assessments and evaluations, completion requirements, course material including multimedia supplementary learning resources, interactive course activities, community building activities and assessments, texts and media, materials and information to demonstrate the appropriate scope, sequence and depth of each course in relation to the stated goals and objectives.	6.10.1	The instructional package is comprehensive and contains a learner friendly description of the syllabus, course plans, learning outcomes assessment and evaluation details, credit hours, teaching/learning strategies, learning packages (study materials study guides, audio/video material, CD ROMs and online texts) and also the annual calendar of activities.	Instructional package, interaction with students and teachers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.10.2	The instructional package is made available (both off-line and on-line) to all registered learners and staff ahead of the courses offering.	Instructional package, interaction with students and teachers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.10.3	The instructional package is reviewed, evaluated and updated regularly through a systematic process.	Instructional package, interaction with students and teachers, institutional data base, minutes of review committees.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
6.11	A variety of learning activities is provided in the course to encourage active learning, collaborative learning and self-assessment.	6.11.1	Appropriate learning strategies such as experiential learning, collaborative learning and personal learning are designed into the course.	Course materials, information package, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.11.2	The institution systematically records and assesses the effectiveness and impact of learning strategies.	Minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with staff and course developers, training material and feedback data.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

6.12	Appropriate personnel and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of course materials and their production processes.	6.12.1	Roles and responsibilities for quality assurance in course materials design, development and production are clearly specified	Course policy documents and approval records	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.12.2	The institution has a mechanism to ensure the relevant competence of the content developers, technical and support staff and others involved in course design, development and production.	Recruitment policy, procedures, training plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.12.3	Technical and production standards in course design, development and production are clearly specified	Quality Assurance Framework; Course Development plans.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.12.4	The course materials developed are pilot-tested and quality assured with reference to the aims and objectives of the programme and learners' needs prior to field release.	Minute of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with staff and course developers and feedback data, evidence for editing, moderating, peer-review, pilot testing feedback and modification.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.12.5	The institution obtains regular feedback from tutors on the course materials, with reference to their user friendliness, appropriateness and effectiveness.	Various formats for feedback, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with tutors.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.12.6	The feedback is utilized in improving the course materials and assuring their quality.	Various formats for feedback, data base, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with tutors, staff and course developers, comparison of course materials before and after feedback.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

6.13	Mechanisms for adoption and adaptation are established to encourage linkages with national and international agencies for course design, development and delivery.	6.13.1	There are MOUs with national and international agencies to share good quality materials which demonstrate good practice in course design, review of materials, development and delivery.	Policy documents, MOUs, minutes of course development committees, executive bodies and interaction with staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.13.2	The institution has linkages with national and international agencies to exchange expertise for content development and delivery methods.	Policy documents, MOUs, minutes of course development committees, executive bodies and interaction with staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.13.3	The institution has established mechanisms and flexibility for sharing technology and other facilities for efficient delivery of the course.	Policy documents, MOUs, minutes of course development committees, executive bodies and interaction with staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.13.4	The institution has a policy relating to the use of Open Educational Resources	Policy documents on OER	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

Criterion 7 - LEARNER SUPPORT AND PROGRESSION

Scope - Learners are supported by the provision of a range of opportunities for tutoring at a distance through the use of various forms of technology. Contact tutoring, assignment tutoring, mentoring, counseling, and the stimulation of peer support structures are employed to facilitate their holistic progression.

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Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
7.1 Learner support is considered during programme development and is built into the design of the programme and course materials.	7.1.1 Sufficient contact sessions are planned and integrated into the course design.	Information pack, year planner, schedules, course materials.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	7.1.2 Mandatory attendance at contact sessions is fixed at a minimum desired level.	Information pack, prospectus, handbook, student information materials, MIS, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	7.1.3 The support of individual learners is built into the design of course materials.	Information pack, prospectus, handbook, student information materials, MIS, interaction with staff and students, feedback from students	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	7.1.4 Peer support mechanisms are built into the course materials.	Information pack, year planner, schedules, course materials, MIS, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	7.1.5	The institution provides on-going support for learner progression across courses within a programme of study.	Policy documents, student data bases, details on monitoring, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
7.2	Learner support is provided using a range of media including appropriate ICTs	7.2.1	The institution uses a range of media to provide support and guidance to learners.	Information pack, year planner, schedules, course materials, MIS, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.2.2	Adequate administrative and technical support is given to tutors to enable them to provide individual academic support for learners.	Information pack, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
7.3	Tutors are selected and trained for their roles as facilitators of learning.	7.3.1	There is a specified set of criteria (qualifications, experience) and procedures for the recruitment of tutors.	Recruitment policies, institution rules and regulations, interactions with management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.3.2	The institution adheres to the recruitment criteria.	Recruitment policies, institution's rules and regulations, minutes of recruitment committees, interactions with management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.3.3	Induction and orientation training programmes are conducted for tutors before the commencement of the course.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, training schedules, training materials, interaction with staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.3.4	There is a mechanism for monitoring the performance of tutors which informs future training programmes.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, training schedules, training materials, interaction with staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	7.3.5	The good performance of tutors is identified and rewarded.	Institution's rules and regulations, interaction with staff and management, minutes of the staff development committees.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
7.4	Tutorial group size allows for support to be provided to learners in various ways	7.4.1	The tutor/learner ratio enables tutors to provide individual support to learners and monitor their progress to completion.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.4.2	The tutor/learner ratio enables tutors to work with small groups of learners and facilitate problem solving.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
7.5	Learners have access to the tutors through a variety of media and locations.	7.5.1	The learners have access to the tutors at fixed centres and can also reach them through various modes such as. by telephone, appointment, e-mail, on-line discussion and video conferencing.	Interaction with staff and students, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.5.2	There is provision for contact sessions specifically for learners entering courses through open access.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
7.6	The turnaround of assignments ensures timely feedback	7.6.1	There is a specified procedure to receive, record, process and return marked assignments to learners.	Institution's rules and regulations, interaction with staff and management, minutes of the staff committees, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, interaction with staff, students and management. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	7.6.2	The specific time frame to return assignments allows learners to benefit from formative feedback.	Institution's rules and regulations, minutes of the staff committees, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	7.6.3	There is adequate time for moderation of marked assignments within the overall time frame.	Institution's rules and regulations, interaction with staff and management, minutes of the staff committees, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	7.6.4	Procedures for receiving, recording, processing and returning assignments are regularly monitored.	Institution's rules and regulations, interaction with staff and management, minutes of the staff committees, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
7.7	Academic, administrative and technical staff facilitate learner success.	7.7.1	The institution employs sufficient and qualified academic staff as tutors and provides professional training and development opportunities to them.	Recruitment and Promotion criteria for staff; cadre book; staff training and development plan	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.7.2	The institution employs sufficient and competent administrative staff to support learners.	Recruitment and Promotion criteria for staff; cadre book; staff training and development plan	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.7.3	The institution employs sufficient and competent technical staff to respond to learner needs.	Recruitment and Promotion criteria for staff; cadre book; staff training and development plan	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	7.7.4	The institution has robust and extensive systems that underpin learner support.	Policy on outreach and learner support; work plan of outreach centres.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	7.7.5	The institution emphasizes service orientation in the training of its staff.	Policy on outreach and learner support; work plan of outreach centres	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
7.8	There are mechanisms to follow up and support learners throughout the duration of their study.	7.8.1	Academic and personal counseling is provided to the learners.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management and staff. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.8.2	Roles and responsibilities for academic and personal counselling are clearly specified.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management and staff. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.8.3	The institution provides specific guidelines, monitoring systems, personnel and institutional spaces to facilitate programmes requiring practical experience.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, placement records, placement cell activity files, information package, interaction with management and staff. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
7.9	Appropriate support and facilities are provided for learners with specific learning difficulties.	7.9.1	The institution identifies and responds to learners with specific learning difficulties.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff, physical facilities and library visits. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	7.9.2	The institution provides materials and services in multiple formats to meet learners' needs.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, Materials, physical facilities and library visits	0. Not at all 1. Poor 2. Satisfactory 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
	7.9.3	The tutors, administrative and technical staff are provided with necessary training to address the needs of learners with specific learning difficulties.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff, training records.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
	7.9.4	The institution has a mechanism to make special concessions to learners with specific learning difficulties.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
7.10	Learner support emphasizes the development of independent learning skills.	7.10.1	The institution provides orientation to the learners on the desired learning skills for pursuing the programme.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		7.10.2	There is appropriate guidance and support structures empowering the learners to acquire the skills for independent learning.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

7.11 Opportunities are provided for academic and social peer interaction.	7.11.1 The institution has support structures that provide opportunities for peer interaction which empower the learners to share knowledge and information and develop interactive and collaborative learning skills.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
7.12 Measures for feedback and monitoring of learner support services are in place.	7.12.1 Regular and systematic monitoring of learner support services for continuous improvement takes place.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	7.12.2 Feedback from learners on support services is regularly solicited and acted upon. Learners are advised of changes resulting from their input.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
7.13 Staff are trained and have a positive attitude towards learner-centred provisions and effectively and efficiently handle the learner-support services.	7.13.1 Staff are trained to handle the various support services provided to the learners such as equipment, technology, physical and infrastructural facilities and communication and information systems.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff, training records.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	7.13.2 There are appropriate guidance and support structures empowering the staff to use appropriate technology and other support provisions to facilitate effective and efficient learning by the students.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff, training records.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	7.13.3	Training of support staff includes service orientation. Support staff are empowered to make decisions in pursuit of learner-oriented services.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff, training records.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
7.14	The institution has mechanisms to facilitate student progression from one level of education to the next higher level successfully and towards gainful employment.	7.14.1	Learners are advised of opportunities to progress into higher level studies.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.14.2	Career guidance advice is provided for learners.	Career guidance policy and plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.14.3	The programmes of the institution provide opportunities for the learners to progress both vertically and horizontally.	Student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.14.4	Progression and completion rates are monitored in relation to institutional and national targets.	Results, Progression rates, MIS, Data Base, national performance data	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.14.5	Performance of past learners is monitored to inform programme revisions.	Institution's rules and regulations, information package, interaction with staff, students and alumni. Tracer studies	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		7.14.6	There is a positive employer perception of graduates.	Results, MIS, Data Base, Employer feedback, Tracer Studies	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
7.15	Learner support systems target retention	7.15.1	Retention rates are monitored against targets	Results, MIS, Database, retention rates in relation to programmes and courses	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	7.15.2 Preventative support provided in initial courses	Results, MIS, Database, retention rates in relation to programmes and courses, student feedback	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	7.15.3 Remedial interventions are provided throughout the programmes for learners at risk of failure	Materials and services related to remedial interventions, student feedback	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>



Criterion 8 - LEARNER ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Scope - Assessment is an essential feature of the teaching and learning process, is properly managed, and reflects institutional, national and international standards. The institution publishes its academic grading policy and applies it with fairness and consistency. Evaluation is based on the stated programme objectives.

Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
8.1 The teaching - learning processes of the institution include formative as well as summative assessment.	8.1.1 The assessment outcomes are used to inform teaching methods and improve the curriculum.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, MIS, database, interaction with students, staff and employers.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	8.1.2 There is a range of assessment tasks and methods for validating learning outcomes in each course	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	8.1.3 There is transparency, fairness and consistency in the assessment system	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the examination, evaluation and moderation committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

8.2	Assessment is aligned with stated learning outcomes.	8.2.1	Assessment tasks undertaken by the learners test the stated learning outcomes.	Institution's objectives, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.2.2	The assessment workload is appropriately linked to the level and credit requirements of the course.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
8.3	Learners are informed about the different types of assessment and assessment techniques for the course.	8.3.1	The course information package provides the details of the assessment, the assessment techniques, the intended learning outcomes and timelines.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, constitution, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.3.2	Induction and orientation programmes for learners at course commencement provide information on assessment expectations.	Induction programmes, schedules, year planner, student handbook, information package, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
8.4	There are systems for the tracking and recording of the learners' performance and progress and a timely communication of the same to the learners.	8.4.1	Procedures for both formative and summative assessment ensure consistency and accuracy of marking / and grading and provide timely feedback to learners.	Institution's rules and regulations, constitution, student handbook, information package, MIS, interaction with administrators, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.4.2	All summative assessment grades are accurately recorded on the learner's record and are communicated promptly.	Institution's rules and regulations, constitution, student handbook, information package, MIS, interaction with administrators, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	8.4.3	Formative assessment enables the learners to receive objective feedback on their performance.	MIS, interaction with administrators, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
8.5	The processes of assessment satisfy the requirements of institutional policy and other appropriate accreditation bodies.	8.5.1	There are quality assurance mechanisms in place to ensure a fair and reliable assessment of learners as stated in the institutional policy.	Quality assurance mechanisms and policies of the institution, policy documents, corporate plans, records on QA.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.5.2	The marking schemes are aligned and are consistent with those of other national agencies and accreditation bodies.	Institution's rules and regulations, policy documents, selection procedures, minutes of the examination , evaluation and moderation committees, schedules and content of orientation programmes, feedback data, interaction with the staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.5.3	The standards and quality of assessment are rigorously monitored and maintained	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the examination evaluation and moderation committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.5.4	The institution has standardized tutor marking schemes	Institution's rules and regulations, performance evaluation reports, review committee minutes, MIS, interaction with administrators, management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.5.5	The institution holds regular standardization meetings with tutors and course coordinators.	Institution's rules and regulations, performance evaluation reports, review committee schedules and minutes, MIS, interaction with administrators, management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

8.6	The institution ensures the security of assessment processes	8.6.1	Arrangements for locally administered summative assessments are secure	Manual of examination procedures; Examination By- Laws	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.6.2	Procedures are in place to ensure the security of identity and of personal information during the assessment process	Manual of examination procedures; Examination By- Laws	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.6.3	Assessment results are recorded securely and reliably and are available to learners	Manual of examination procedures; Examination By- Laws; interaction with students	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.6.4	Arrangements are in place to ensure that the integrity of the certification processes is not compromised	Manual of examination procedures; Examination By- Laws	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
8.7	National and international benchmarks guide assessment.	8.7.1	The internal quality assurance processes and assessment standards are correlated with the requirements of relevant governmental and accreditation agencies.	Quality assurance mechanisms and policies of the institution, policy documents, corporate plans, records on QA, QA mechanisms of relevant regulatory bodies	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.7.2	The institution makes reference to practice in other similar institutions to benchmark its assessment standards.	Quality assurance mechanisms and policies of the institution, policy documents, corporate plans, records on QA, QA mechanisms of relevant regulatory bodies, institution's rules and regulations.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

8.8	Detailed marking schemes are provided to all examiners.	8.8.1	There is a procedure for selection and orientation of the examiners on the marking schemes to ensure consistency.	Institution's rules and regulations, policy documents, selection procedures, minutes of the examination, evaluation and moderation committees, schedules and contents of orientation programmes, feedback data, interactions with the staff and management	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.8.2	There are procedures to ensure that examiners apply the marking scheme in a consistent manner.	Quality assurance mechanisms and policies of the institution, policy documents, corporate plans, records on QA, QA mechanisms of relevant regulatory bodies and institution's rules and regulations.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.8.3	The assessment strategy of the institution has provision for internal and external moderation.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, constitution, minutes of the grievance and disciplinary committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
8.9	Appropriate measures are in place to ensure the integrity of assessment.	8.9.1	The learners are made aware of ethical practices and code of conduct for submission of assignments and project work and for sitting examinations	Institution's rules and regulations, code of conduct and ethical practices, constitution, minutes of the grievance and disciplinary committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.9.2	There is a clearly stated disciplinary procedure for handling malpractices and violation of code of conduct and ethical standards relating to copying, plagiarism, reproduction of open source materials and Intellectual Property Rights.	Institution's rules and regulations, code of conduct and ethical practices, constitution, minutes of the grievance and disciplinary committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	8.9.3 The institution adheres to the disciplinary procedure and initiates timely and justifiable disciplinary action wherever applicable.	Institution's rules and regulations, code of conduct and ethical practices, constitution, minutes of the grievance and disciplinary committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	8.9.4 There is provision for grievance redressal and appeals.	Institution's rules and regulations, code of conduct and ethical practices, constitution, minutes of the grievance and disciplinary committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
8.10 Assessment results are documented and communicated without delay to all learners.	8.10.1 At the beginning of every academic session, the institution decides and communicates to the students the timelines for assessment and the publication of results.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff and corporate plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	8.10.2 The institution adheres to the scheduled timelines	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff and corporate plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	8.10.3 The institution ensures transparency in assessment by communicating the procedures and processes through various media and through the appeals and grievance redressal mechanism.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	8.10.5	The institution adheres to the timelines for the distribution of grades and transcripts.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff and corporate plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
8.11	Learner satisfaction with the programme is appropriately measured.	8.11.1	Learner satisfaction rates are regularly collected and disseminated.	Results, MIS, database.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
8.12	Graduation rates are aligned with institutional and national targets.	8.12.1	Completion rates of learners are aligned with the institutional targets.	Results, MIS, database.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.12.2	Completion, retention and progression rates are monitored on a continuous basis.	Institution's rules and regulations, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, course materials, interaction with staff, students and alumni.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.12.3	The institution has a mechanism for reviewing the effectiveness of the processes and the overall performance of the assessment system.	Institution's rules and regulations, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, course materials, interaction with staff, students and alumni.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.12.4	The institution provides periodic reports on academic performance to stakeholders including employers	MIS, database, website, advocacy materials, advertisements.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		8.12.5	The institution publishes the results of annual surveys of graduate employment.	MIS, database, website, advocacy materials, advertisements	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>



Criterion 9 - LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

Scope - The institution has adequate and appropriate infrastructure facilities to conduct quality academic programmes through distance education. The institution uses technological innovations in educational transactions to enrich the learning experiences it provides to students and manages the institution in a technology-enabled way for effective institutional functioning.

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Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
9.1 The institution has adequate physical facilities to conduct academic programmes and administrative functions efficiently.	9.1.1 The institution has sufficient classrooms with the required ICT support to run the scheduled contact sessions.	Visit to physical facilities, interaction with staff and students, information package, student handbook.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	9.1.2 Necessary physical infrastructure (space and buildings) is available for conducting small group interactions and other academic activities.	Visit to physical facilities, interaction with staff and students, information package, student handbook.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	9.1.3 The buildings and physical space are sufficient to accommodate the administrative staff, for document processing, storage and other purposes.	Visit to physical facilities, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	9.1.4 The institution has well equipped laboratories including media and production laboratories for developing course materials.	Visit to physical facilities, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	9.1.5 The institution provides individual offices for academic staff with access to technology to support teaching-learning and research.	Visit to physical facilities, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
9.2 The institution has plans to ensure that the growth of the infrastructure keeps pace with the academic growth of the institution.	9.2.1 The institution has a master plan reflecting the future development of the campus.	Master plan, visit to physical facilities, corporate plan, interaction with infrastructure development committee and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	9.2.2 There is a strategic plan for the institution covering the anticipated growth of the infrastructure in order to keep pace with institutional plans for academic expansion.	Strategic plan, corporate plan, policy documents, minutes of the various infrastructure development committees, interaction with management and administrative staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	9.2.3 The institution conducts an annual review of facilities and usage rates.	Strategic plan, corporate plan, policy documents, minutes of the various infrastructure development committees, interaction with management and administrative staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	9.2.4 The outcome of the review is used to improve the infrastructural facilities and as input to the strategic plan of the institution.	Strategic plan, corporate plan, policy documents, minutes of the various infrastructure development committees, feedback data, interaction with management and administrative staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

9.3	There are procedures and mechanisms in place to ensure optimum use, maintenance and development of the infrastructure facilities of the institution.	9.3.1	The institution's strategic plan gives a clear direction on the optimum utilization, maintenance and development of infrastructural facilities.	Strategic plan, corporate plan, policy documents, minutes of the various infrastructure development committees, interaction with management and administrative staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		9.3.2	The institution has set procedures for maintenance of the infrastructural facilities including annual maintenance contracts.	Strategic plan, corporate plan, policy documents, minutes of the various infrastructure development committees, interaction with management and administrative staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		9.3.3	There is a specific budgetary allocation based on the information provided by the infrastructure review for the maintenance and development of the infrastructure.	Allocations, balance sheets, audited statements of expenditure, corporate plan, minutes of the finance committee and infrastructure development committee, interaction with management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
9.4	Library facilities include technology aided learning materials to enable students to acquire information, knowledge and skills.	9.4.1	The library facilities of the institution are developed keeping in mind the requirements of the distance learner.	Information package, student handbook, course materials, feedback data, library committee minutes, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		9.4.2	The library catalogue is up-to-date and easily accessible to learners.	Interaction with students and staff; library committee minutes	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		9.4.3	The library is computerized and has sufficient materials available in electronic form (e-books, e-journals).	Information package, student handbook, course materials, feedback data, library committee minutes, visit to library, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	9.4.4	The library provides internet and reprographic facilities to staff and learners.	Library committee minutes, visit to library, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	9.4.5	There is an inter – library borrowing facility which is accessible to both students and the staff.	Library committee minutes, visit to library, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	9.4.6	The library has sufficient qualified staff trained to deal with the latest electronic media and provide adequate support to the learners to access the library facilities.	Recruitment policies, institution’s rules and regulations, minutes of recruitment committees, interaction with management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	9.4.7	There is justified allocation of financial resources for the upkeep, maintenance and development of the library.	Allocations, balance sheets, audited statements of expenditure, corporate plan, minutes of the finance committee and infrastructure development committee, interaction with management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
9.5	The institution uses technology as a learning resource and manages its activities in a technology enabled way.	9.5.1	The institution makes extensive use of technology for learning and ensures that the technical infrastructure for delivery (e.g. computers, internet, electricity, audio/video facilities) is fully operational.	Strategic plan, corporate plan, policy documents, minutes of the various infrastructure development committees, interaction with management and administrative staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		9.5.2	There is a process in place to monitor and maintain the equipment and technology in good working order and also to facilitate annual maintenance contracts.	Strategic plan, corporate plan, budget allocations, minutes of the various infrastructure development committees, interaction with management and administrative staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	9.5.3	The institution allocates sufficient budget annually to replace, add and deploy new technology and related facilities..	Allocations, balance sheets, audited statements of expenditure, corporate plan, minutes of the finance committee and infrastructure development committee, interaction with management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	9.5.4	The institution has a Management Information System (MIS) in place which provides for proper communication among the various units of the institution, with the various stakeholders and with the learners and staff.	MIS, website, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	9.5.5	Adequate computing facilities are available in the institution and are accessible to all academic and administrative staff.	Information package, student handbook, visit to facilities, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
9.6	There is wide distribution of the services through outreach centres to ensure equity and access.	9.6.1	The outreach centers are widely distributed across different geographic areas in inaccessible places thus catering to larger numbers and remote rural populations.	Policy document, corporate plans, institutional details, details on outreach centres, expansion plans, strategic plan documents, interaction with management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		9.6.2	The information on the available services at the outreach centers and those at the central facility is made known to all learners and staff.	Policy document, corporate plans, institutional details, details on outreach centres, expansion plans, strategic plan documents, interaction with management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	9.6.3	The institution constantly monitors the performance of the outreach centers in terms of quality, access and equity.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	9.6.4	The institution has clearly laid down guidelines to select, review, monitor and provide guidance to the managers and staff of the outreach centers.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	9.6.5	There is a strong and cordial linkage between the institution and the outreach centers facilitating timely communication and good relationships.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
9.7	The institution has mechanisms to regularly evaluate the adequacy and accessibility of resources and services for learners and takes appropriate remedial measures to address inadequacies.	9.7.1	The institution obtains feedback from learners and staff on the adequacy and accessibility of the support facilities and learning resources available at the institution and the outreach centers.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		9.7.2	The outcome of the feedback is acted upon and appropriate remedial measures are taken to overcome any inadequacies.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		9.7.3	There is a provision in the budget for meeting unforeseen emergencies in the provision of learning support facilities	Allocations, balance sheets, audited statements of expenditure, corporate plan, minutes of the finance committee and infrastructure development committee, interaction with management. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

9.8	When libraries or laboratories or any other facilities of other institutions are used to meet the needs of the programme, the institution has written agreements to ensure that these services and facilities are available to learners.	9.8.1	The institution has clear procedures for learners to access the facilities of other institutions available on a sharing basis.	Policy documents, MOUs, minutes of course development committees, executive bodies and interaction with the staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		9.8.2	Contracts with other institutions allowing learner access to specified facilities are clearly written and legally enforceable.	Policy documents, MOUs, minutes of course development committees, executive bodies and interaction with the staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		9.8.3	The institution ensures regular monitoring of the accessibility of the facilities and services offered to the learners by other institutions.	Course materials, information package, year planner, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>



Criterion 10 - RESEARCH, CONSULTANCY AND EXTENSION SERVICES

Scope - Continuous development of educational programmes and services is influenced by research. The institution supports community outreach by providing consultancy and extension services.

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Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
10.1 The institution actively encourages and promotes research by academic staff and learners.	10.1.1 There is a research committee or an appropriate body which develops procedures and guidelines for undertaking research by academic staff.	Corporate plan, research committee composition, minutes and budget allocations, guidelines, rules and regulations and roles and responsibilities of various members.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	10.1.2 The institution provides seed money for academic staff to conduct research.	Corporate plan, research committee composition, minutes and budget allocations, guidelines, rules and regulations and roles and responsibilities of various members.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	10.1.3 The institution has strong links to and collaborates with various international, national, governmental and non-governmental agencies in undertaking research.	Policy documents, MOUs, minutes of executive bodies and interaction with the staff and management, records of collaboration and support.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	10.1.4	The institution facilitates and encourages research by providing administrative and academic support to its academic staff in the form of study leave, project preparation, sponsorship, physical facilities, preferential work load allocations etc.)	Corporate plan, research committee composition, minutes and budget allocations, guidelines, rules and regulations and roles and responsibilities of various members, records of support given and outputs.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
10.2	Findings of research underpin the development of the programmes and the courses of the institution.	10.2.1	The institution undertakes market research and solicits the views of employers, industry and local communities to prioritize programme and course development.	Corporate plan, policy documents, research committee minutes and findings, guidelines, rules and regulations and roles and responsibilities of various members, documentation of surveys.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		10.2.2	The research output is used to make informed choices for developing programmes and courses.	Minutes of the course planning and course design committees, feedback data, minutes of the research committees, research output data and verification of the same, interaction with staff, course developers and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		10.2.3	Research into technologies is encouraged to prepare the institution to make informed choices about their introduction.	Minutes of the course planning and course design committees, feedback data, minutes of the research committees, research output data and verification of the same, interaction with staff, course developers and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
10.3	There are appropriate procedures and measures to ensure ethical practices in research.	10.3.1	The institution has a stated code of conduct and ethical practices in research.	Code of conduct and ethical standards.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		10.3.2	There is a stated procedure adopted by the research committee or an appropriate body to ensure specified ethical practices in research relating to plagiarism, copying, intellectual property rights etc.	Corporate plan, research committee minutes and findings, guidelines, rules and regulations and roles and responsibilities of various members, violation of code of conduct and ethical standards and action taken.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

10.4	There are relevant mechanisms and procedures to monitor and evaluate research within the institution.	10.4.1	At appropriate stages, the research committee or an appropriate body monitors and evaluates the research work of the academic staff that is funded by the institution.	Corporate plan, policy documents, research committee minutes and findings, guidelines, rules and regulations and roles and responsibilities of various members, progress reports.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		10.4.2	Research activities are an integral part of the duties of academic staff. Publications and research projects are given due recognition and good work is rewarded.	Corporate plan, work norms and job descriptions, performance appraisals, research committee minutes and findings, guidelines, rules and regulations and roles and responsibilities of various members, records of evaluations and given rewards.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		10.4.3	Academic staff are encouraged to disseminate the research findings that are relevant to other units of the institution.	Corporate plan, research committee minutes and findings of research dissemination seminars, records of research committee meetings.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		10.4.4	Scholarly publications of the institution are subject to peer review.	Research reports; Compilation of research publications	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		10.4.5	The institution encourages systemic research in ODL and the results feed into the improvement of the system.	Corporate plan, research committee minutes and findings of research dissemination seminars, records of research committee meetings.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
10.5	There are appropriate mechanisms and procedures to facilitate and encourage consultancy services to the wider community	10.5.1	The potential expertise of the academic staff is identified and published through all media.	Corporate plan, research committee minutes and findings, guidelines, rules and regulations and roles and responsibilities of various members.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	10.5.2	The institution has a policy for sharing the remuneration earned through consultancy between the academic staff member and the institution.	Corporate plan, policy documents, research committee minutes and findings, guidelines, rules and regulations and roles and responsibilities of various members, finance committee records.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
10.6	The institution is responsive to community needs and conducts relevant extension and awareness programmes.	10.6.1	The institution has an extension unit which undertakes various community engagement activities such as HIV/AIDS awareness, gender issues, environment issues, livelihood improvement etc.	Information pack, prospectus, handbook, student information materials, MIS, interaction with staff and students, corporate plan, year planner, extension activity committee minutes, records on extension activities, annual reports.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		10.6.2	Community work undertaken by learners is recognized by the institution in fulfillment of graduation requirements.	Information pack, prospectus, handbook, student information materials, MIS, interaction with staff and students, corporate plan, year planner, extension activity committee minutes, records on extension activities, annual reports.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
10.7	Research, consultancy and extension services are actively promoted to build linkages with industry.	10.7.1	The institution has strong industry – institution – community linkages built into its activities through membership of Advisory Boards, Council and Board of Governors.	Interaction with staff and students, corporate plan, year planner, student handbook, extension activity committee minutes, records on extension activities, annual reports.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		10.7.2	The industry – institution – community network fosters close relationships between the world of work and the world of learning for the learners.	Information pack, prospectus, handbook, student information materials, MIS, interaction with staff and students, corporate plan, year planner, student handbook, extension activity committee minutes, records on extension activities, annual reports.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

Programmes

Criterion 1 - INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Scope - The mission, policies and procedures of the Institution reflect its commitment to distance learning and its distance learning initiatives. The Institution must have administrative policies and procedures, appropriately qualified personnel, efficient management and administrative capacity, physical facilities, financial stability and resources adequate for the proper operation of the Institution and the discharge of its obligations to all its students.

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Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Evidence	Performance Measure
A. Mission			
1.1 The Institution has a mission statement that is relevant to its operational context and supported by clearly defined goals and objectives	1.1.1 The Institution's mission statement makes specific reference to its commitment to quality across all modes of delivery	Mission Statement, university publications	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	1.1.2 The Institution has clearly defined goals and objectives for its distance learning initiatives	Strategic Plan	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
B. Planning			
1.2 Policy statements and action plans to fulfill the stated mission are formulated for all operations and incorporated into the Institutional Strategic Plan	1.2.1 The institution has a Strategic Plan in place which provides a basis for all key activities of the institution.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; year planner; schedule of activities; minutes of statutory boards/committees; interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	1.2.2	The institution has a Strategic Plan which is appropriately aligned to the institutional vision and mission.	Strategic Plan/Corporate Plan, mission and vision documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
1.3	To achieve its stated objectives, the institution has systematic and transparent procedures for planning and development.	1.3.1	The planning process is clearly defined, fair and open to relevant stakeholders.	Management Information System, website, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.3.2	The institution ensures that the stakeholders are aware of the institution's objectives and of the role they are expected to play in achieving them.	Feedback documents; induction and orientation workshop data; advocacy material including prospectus and brochures.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.4	Implementation plans of the institution are documented and effectively communicated to the relevant personnel.	1.4.1	Responsibility for implementation and operationalisation of institutional plans is clearly documented, defined and communicated to the relevant staff.	Operational plans of the institution; year planner, academic schedules, programme information package; internal delegation of powers, specified and communicated roles and responsibilities.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.4.2	Staff are briefed on the relevant plans and on their role in the implementation processes.	Documents specifying the roles and responsibilities of staff; documents pertaining to appointments and transfers and responsible authorities; policy manual; interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.5	There are monitoring procedures to ensure that the policies and plans of the institution are implemented, evaluated and improved from time to time	1.5.1	Internal mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the stated policies and plans are in place.	Strategic/Corporate Plan; year planner; annual report; minutes of executive and academic boards, planning and implementation policy, institutional monitoring and evaluation reports.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.5.2	The various data and information obtained through monitoring and evaluation are considered and reviewed by the senior management to initiate necessary improvements.	Strategic/Corporate Plan; year planner; annual report; minutes of executive and academic boards, planning/implementation policy, institutional practices. management committee meetings, minutes and agenda	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

<b>C. Policies</b>					
1.6	The institution has a stated policy on partnerships and collaborations.	1.6.1	The institution has a clearly identified policy that provides the basis for collaborative relationships and partnerships involving public – private - governmental and non-governmental agencies for the development and delivery of quality programmes.	Policy documents, Memoranda Understandings, Corporate/Strategic Plan, annual reports.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.6.2	There are specified criteria for establishing collaborations and partnerships and for monitoring and evaluating their effectiveness with reference to defined performance indicators.	Policy documents, MOUs, Corporate/Strategic Plan, annual report	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.7	The institution has a clear policy on ethical practices and ensures its implementation in all its activities.	1.7.1	The institution has a defined code of conduct and ethical standards for all levels of staff and activities	Documents specifying code of conduct, ethical standards, corporate plan, minutes of relevant committees, structure, prospectus, brochures, information package.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.7.2	Management, staff and learners are made aware of the defined code of conduct and ethical standards and adhere to it.	Interaction with staff and students, minutes of management committees	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.8	The institution has a stated policy with regard to quality assurance and monitoring in all aspects of its operations.	1.8.1	There is an integrated framework to ensure the quality of the academic and administrative activities of the institution.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; quality framework, agenda and minutes of relevant committees, quality circles, internal quality assurance teams, quality assurance procedures.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	1.8.2 There are clearly stipulated internal quality assurance processes for both administrative and academic activities.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; quality framework, agendas and minutes of relevant committees, quality circles, internal quality assurance teams, quality assurance procedures.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.8.3 Internal quality assurance mechanisms are aligned with the requirements of the relevant external quality assurance agencies.	Corporate Plan, Management Information System, website, internal circulars, Quality Assurance framework and Quality Assurance policy documents, interaction with staff and students, documents on external quality assurance agency.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.8.4 Quality assurance policies are effectively communicated to all the constituents of the institution.	Corporate Plan, Management Information System, website, internal circulars, Quality Assurance framework and Quality Assurance policy documents, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.9 The primary purpose of the institution's quality assurance policy and procedures is to achieve quality enhancement	1.9.1 Quality enhancement is identified as a goal of the quality assurance policy	Quality Assurance Framework; Quality Assurance Policy	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.9.2 Specific improvement targets are identified for each activity that is subjected to monitoring and review	Minutes of the Quality Assurance Committee; review reports	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.10 There is a system for implementing and reviewing the quality assurance procedures of the institution.	1.10.1 The institution undertakes quality reviews/ audits at regular intervals and ensures the quality of all activities.	Corporate /Strategic Plan; institution plans, quality assurance committee structure and minutes of quality assurance committee meetings, interaction with staff, minutes of statutory boards, planning and implementation committee meeting minutes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	1.10.2 The institution constantly monitors and reviews the effectiveness of its quality assurance procedures. The outcomes are used to improve implementation strategies.	Corporate /Strategic Plan; institution plans, quality assurance committee structure and minutes of meetings, interaction with staff, minutes of statutory boards, planning and implementation committee meeting minutes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.10.3 The institution provides training to its staff for effective implementation of the quality assurance procedures.	Activity schedules, training modules, review documents, minutes and agendas of Quality Assurance committee and staff committees; performance appraisal forms, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.11 The institution has a stated policy for financial support for enrolled students.	1.11.1 There is a clear and transparent policy for the administration of financial support to students, including scholarships, bursaries, fees and reimbursements.	Policy documents, brochure, prospectus, programme information package, financial statement, financial information systems.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.11.2 The institution monitors the implementation of the policy on financial support to students.	Expenditure statements, records of disbursements, financial information system, interaction with students and administrative staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.11.3 The institution regularly reviews the financial disbursements to students and takes necessary steps for timely disbursements.	Expenditure statements, records of disbursements, financial information system, interaction with students and administration staff	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.11.4 The institution makes special provision to ensure equity and access to disadvantaged groups within its target student population.	Prospectus, institutional policy document, student handbook, student profiles, admission policy, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

1.12 There are effective and appropriate appeal mechanisms for all constituents of the institution.	1.12.1 The institution has transparent appeal mechanisms and ensures timely, justified redressal of grievances.	Agenda and minutes of grievance and appeal committee; interaction with staff and students; efficiency of reporting and consequential action	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	1.12.2 The details of the appeal policies and procedures are readily accessible to all staff and learners.	Policy documents, prospectus, handbook, brochures, information package, bylaws, rules and regulations..	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
D. Organisational Structure			
1.13 The governance and organizational structure of the institution is appropriate for its operations	1.13.1 The institution has an organisation chart with specified units and positions appropriate to its functions.	Organisation chart, Corporate/Strategic Plan, policy manuals, handbook, planning implementation policy/framework; documented internal delegation of powers, websites.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	1.13.2 The institution employs sufficient, appropriately qualified administrative, academic and technical staff to handle various specialized tasks and activities.	Human resource plan, Corporate/Strategic Plan, staff recruitment, promotion and development policy documents; cadre provision documents.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	1.13.3 The governance structure provides for collegial decision making and oversight of institutional activities and ensures the overall quality of the institutional provisions.	Organogram, Corporate/Strategic Plan, policy manuals, handbook, planning/ implementation policy/framework; documented internal delegations of powers and authority, websites, human resource plans, documented performance review and systems, efficiency of reporting and consequential action.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
1.14 Mechanisms are in place to ensure effective coordination among different institutional constituencies.	1.14.1 Committee membership is designed to secure appropriate representation of relevant constituencies in decision making processes.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; handbook, faculty brochures, management committee records, academic board records, interaction with staff, procedures for nomination and appointment to committees, by-laws.	0 1 2 3 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	1.14.2 There is a formal mechanism for liaison between committees to ensure proper coordination and dissemination of information among the various constituencies of the institution.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; handbook, faculty brochures, management committee records, academic board records, interaction with staff, procedures for nomination and appointment to committees, by-laws and all committee meeting minutes, evidence of consequential actions, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.14.3 There are established channels of communication so that issues discussed in committees are communicated to the senior management for appropriate decision.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; handbook, faculty brochures, management committee records, academic board records, interaction with staff, procedures for nomination and appointment to committees, by-laws and all committee meeting minutes, evidence of consequential actions, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
<b>E. Staffing</b>			
1.15 The academic staff possess appropriate qualifications, skills and expertise for their positions, including those related to Open and distance Learning (ODL)	1.15.1 The institution has stated criteria for the recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff	MIS, recruitment, retention and promotion criteria policy documents	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.15.2 The recruitment process is transparent and the institution ensures adherence to the stated criteria.	MIS, recruitment, retention and promotion criteria policy documents	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.15.3 The selection and promotion criteria give preference to candidates with experience and expertise in various Open and Distance Learning activities such as course material preparation, distance tutoring, supervision, management of learning through distance.	Management committee records, annual report, leadership and reporting responsibilities, policy documents of the Chief Executive Officer and senior management, efficiency of reporting consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.16 The administrative staff possess appropriate qualifications and experience for their positions and roles.	1.16.1 The institution has stated criteria for recruitment, retention and promotion of administrative staff.	MIS, recruitment, retention and promotion criteria policy documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	1.16.2 The recruitment process is transparent and the institution ensures adherence to the stated criteria.	MIS, recruitment, retention and promotion criteria policy documents and interview policy and interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.16.3 The selection and promotion criteria give preference to candidates with experience and skills in various Open and Distance Learning activities.	Management committee records, annual report, leadership and reporting responsibilities, policy documents of the Chief Executive Officer and senior management, efficiency of reporting consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.17 There are clear lines of responsibility and accountability within the institution and the roles of staff are clearly spelt out.	1.17.1 The roles and responsibilities of the staff within the institution are clearly defined and every staff member is aware of his/her role and responsibilities through job descriptions and clear organization charts.	Human resource development document, documented internal delegations and service statements, staff roles and responsibilities documentation, codes of obligations and rights, documentation of performance review systems, work norms, job description and organizational charts.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.17.2 There are clearly defined work norms.	Human resource development document, documented internal delegations and service statements, staff roles and responsibilities documentation, codes of obligations and rights, documentation of performance review systems, work norms.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.17.3 There is a justified workload distribution based on the time required by the concerned staff to complete the various assigned tasks (contact hours, tutoring, supervision of tutors, assessment etc).	Work norms, performance and appraisal committee structure, TOR and minutes of meetings, appraisal forms and feedback methods; policies of self appraisal, interaction with staff and Chief Executive Officer of institution.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.17.4 There is an effective staff performance management and appraisal system which promotes the accountability and effectiveness of the staff in performing their activities.	Work norms, performance and appraisal committee structure, TOR and minutes of meetings, appraisal forms and feedback methods; policies of self appraisal, interaction with staff and Chief Executive Officer of institution.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

F. Facilities							
1.18 The institution has an effective system for the management and maintenance of equipment and facilities.	1.18.1 The institution has appropriate financial and administrative provision to ensure proper maintenance and operation of equipment and facilities.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, financial management information system, MIS, expenditure statements, minutes of maintenance and procurement committees, grievance and complaints committee documents and minutes.	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
			<input type="radio"/>				
	1.18.2 There is adequate financial allocation for procurement, replacement, maintenance and upgrading of the technology and other equipment required for effective programme delivery.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, financial management information system, MIS, expenditure statements, minutes of maintenance and procurement committees, grievance and complaints committee documents and minutes. ICT operational committee and minutes of meetings, Institution plan for use and maintenance of technology for teaching and learning.	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
			<input type="radio"/>				
	1.18.3 There are established procedures to take care of regular maintenance works and to handle emergencies.	Human resource plan, organogram, maintenance department/unit structure, roles and responsibilities of staff, minutes of meetings, interaction with staff and student.	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
			<input type="radio"/>				
1.19 Appropriate training is provided to staff on the use and maintenance of new technology, equipment, facilities, and communication and information systems available/deployed in the Institution.	1.19.1 The Strategic Plan of the institution includes specified provision for staff development activities.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; staff development centre/unit plans, training schedules, training manuals, feedback on training programmes, training budget, interaction with staff.	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
			<input type="radio"/>				
	1.19.2 The institution conducts staff development programmes to improve the skills and competencies of the staff in handling the technology, equipment and facilities of the institution.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; staff development centre/unit plans, training schedules, training manuals, feedback on training programmes, training budget, interaction with staff.	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
			<input type="radio"/>				
	1.19.3 The budget allocation for the staff development programme is sufficient to provide in-house and off-site training opportunities for staff.	Financial information and management system, MIS, training budget allocations, staff development centre/unit/committee meeting minutes.	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
			<input type="radio"/>				

**G. Financial Management**

1.20 The financial procedures are clearly stated and adhered to by the institution.	1.20.1 The institution's financial procedures comply with the requirements of national financial regulatory bodies.	Financial allocation to the institution, corporate/strategic plan, annual reports, audit reports, cash flow and balance sheets.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	1.20.2 There is a formally established body with designated responsibility for oversight of the institution's adherence to statutory requirements and for judicious use of available financial resources.	Financial allocation to the institution, Corporate/Strategic Plan, annual reports, audit reports, cash flow and balance sheets.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	1.20.3 The budget allocation process is transparent and ensures that all planned and approved activities can take place.	Financial allocation to the institution, Corporate/Strategic Plan, annual reports, audit reports, cash flow and balance sheets.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	1.20.4 The institution earmarks a specific budget allocation for the enhancement of the technology infrastructure required for quality teaching and learning and monitors its utilization.	Financial allocation to the institution, Corporate/Strategic Plan, annual reports, audit reports, cash flow and balance sheets.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	1.20.5 The institution has an internal and external financial audit mechanism. Audits take place at regular intervals.	Internal audit reports, auditor general's reports, annual reports, audit procedures, audit committee structure, roles and responsibilities and minutes of meetings.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
1.21 There is provision for financial assistance for needy learners.	1.21.1 The institution has clearly stated guidelines for providing scholarships, bursaries , stipends and other financial assistance to learners.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, Prospectus, information package to students; website, bursary committee procedures, minutes of meetings, interaction with students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	1.21.2 The institution secures funds to support needy learners.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, Prospectus, information package to students; website, bursary committee procedures, minutes of meetings, interaction with students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	1.21.3 The institution ensures the effective and timely disbursement of the available financial aid / scholarships / bursaries etc. to the learners.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, Prospectus, information package to students; website, bursary committee procedures, minutes of meetings, interaction with students and interactions with students; financial statements of disbursement of bursaries/stipends.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
1.22	Provision is made in the budget to promote and enable constructive experimentation in the design of courses and delivery methods.	1.22.1 There is a budgetary provision for research and innovation in the design and delivery of academic programmes and courses by distance learning.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; financial information management system; financial allocation; research committee plans, minutes of meetings; review of research committee tasks	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.22.2 The research and development committee or any other appropriate body monitors research activities. Its terms of reference include resource mobilization and utilization and facilitation of networking and information flow among the various departments and units of the institution.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; research and development committee structure, roles and responsibilities of members, evidence of research review and feedback; annual reports.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
H. Learner Centred Management				
1.23	The institution has a realistic academic calendar that is followed meticulously.	1.23.1 The institution plans its academic activities and prepares the academic calendar at the beginning of each academic year involving all units, divisions and departments.	Year planners, operational schedules, prospectus and brochures of academic programmes, learning and teaching plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	1.23.2 The academic calendar is made available to both students and staff of the institution at the beginning of the academic year.	Year planners, operational schedules, prospectus and brochures of academic programmes, learning and teaching plan and interaction with students, MIS, website.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.24 The institution's commitment to learners is documented and made available to all stakeholders.	1.24.1 The institution has clearly stated and documented procedures / processes reflecting its commitment to its learners.	Institution handbooks, prospectus, brochures, information package to students, website, advertisements, procedures documents, interaction with students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.24.2. The institution has clearly stated and documented processes for evaluating its achievements in terms of commitment to its learners.	Institution handbooks, prospectus, brochures, information package to students, website, advertisements, procedures documents and interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.24.3 The institution disseminates factual information on its commitment to learners.	MIS, website, circulars; special communication documents, minutes of meetings, evidence of circulation; interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.25 Entry requirements and other prerequisites for programmes and courses are clearly specified prior to entry so that selection of programmes or courses is relevant and meaningful to the student community.	1.25.1 The institution clearly states course requirements, prior knowledge and skills required for pursuing the course, resource implications, time schedules, access to media and technology, success and dropout rates of past students to enable prospective learners to make an informed choice.	Handbook, Faculty Prospectus, programme/course information package, brochures, website, other advocacy material including advertisements; interaction with students; documentation on student performance.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.25.2 The institution strictly adheres to advertised admission requirements.	Documents relating to admissions.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

1.26	There is an up-to-date and integrated database about learners providing information on demographics, language, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic and educational backgrounds and special needs. The confidentiality of data is maintained.	1.26.1 The institution has a comprehensive database of learner profiles which is updated at regular intervals.	MIS, student profiles.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.26.2 Appropriate security measures are in place to ensure the confidentiality of personal data.	Procedures and practices of record management, management of MIS, code of conduct and ethical standards, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.26.3 The institution has policies and procedures in place to ensure that only authorized personnel have access to students' personal data.	Procedures and practices of record management, management of MIS, code of conduct and ethical standards, interaction with staff and students. Policy documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.27	Research into the needs and expectations of learners provides inputs to policy making in the institution.	1.27.1 The institution reviews and analyses the data on learner profiles, needs and expectations.	Documentation on programme/course development process, house style/other relevant manuals; need analysis questionnaire and documented feedback data; meeting minutes of institutional research committees; interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		1.27.2 The outcome of reviews and research data collection and analysis, informs the design and redesign of course materials, assessment exercises and tutoring assignments.	Documentation on programme/course development process, house style/other relevant manuals; need analysis questionnaire and documented feedback data; meeting minutes of institutional research committees; interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.28	The institution has formal and informal mechanisms and procedures in place to obtain feedback from learners.	1.28.1 The institution obtains formal and informal feedback from learners at regular intervals on the efficiency and effectiveness of its processes.	Stakeholder analysis feedback forms; database; documentation on workshops/meetings with outcomes; evidence of consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	1.28.2	The results of the feedback obtained from learners feed into the decision making and planning of its programmes.	Stakeholder analysis feedback forms; database; documentation on workshops/meetings with outcomes; evidence of consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.29 There are effective channels for communication with potential, current and past students, with key external organizations, and with all staff and tutors involved in the learning-teaching process.	1.29.1	The institution has a formal mechanism for obtaining feedback from students, staff and other stakeholders on the teaching-learning process.	Documented feedback mechanisms and plans; evidence of systems which achieve integration of feedback data from all stakeholders; surveys of stakeholder awareness and opinions; interaction with stakeholders.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.29.2	There are various channels of communication established to ensure a timely information flow and dialogue across various units and staff of the institution.	Management Information System, websites, interaction with stakeholders and documented feedback mechanisms and plans; evidence of systems which achieve integration of feedback data from all stakeholders; surveys of stakeholder awareness and opinions; e-mail and discussion forums, interaction with stakeholders.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.29.3	The institution has mechanisms in place for interaction among the staff.	Management Information System, websites, interaction between staff, e-mail service and access.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.29.4	Clear channels of communication are established between current learners and the tutors and academic staff involved in the learning process	Course information, frequency analysis of communication events	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.29.5	Relevant updated information on feedback received is made available to the stakeholders through print and electronic media.	Management Information System, websites, interaction with stakeholders and documented feedback mechanisms and plans; evidence of systems which achieve integration of feedback data from all stakeholders; surveys of stakeholder awareness and opinions; interaction with stakeholders.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

1.30 The institution has mechanisms to maintain and monitor close links with learners.	1.30.1 Teacher and learner interaction is facilitated through formal contact sessions and tutor feedback on assignments.	Prospectus, faculty brochures, programme/course information package, interaction with staff and students, feedback forms and evidence of consequential action.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.30.2 The institution has a clear understanding of the technology profile of the learners to optimize communication between learners and the institution.	MIS; Learner Profile	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.30.3 The institution uses available technology (e.g. internet, yahoo groups, e-mail communications, mobile phones ) to communicate with the learners on a continuous basis.	Website, e-mail provision for students/teachers sample, Management Information System, guidelines to students, technology facilities and evidence of access, budget allocations.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.30.4 The institution facilitates and provides for social interaction through approved student societies.	Handbook, corporate/strategic plan, constitutions of approved societies, interaction with students, establishment and support for approved societies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.31 There is a prompt response to the learners' needs for academic, administrative and personal support.	1.31.1 The institution provides support to learners through appropriately qualified staff.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, policy documents, evidence of student counselling centre/unit, its structure, functioning, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.31.2 The institution ensures the availability of appropriate academic, administrative and other instructional support for effective delivery of the programme	Documents on adequacy of staff; documents on qualifications of staff; documents on infrastructure facilities in the centre and outreach centres, evidence of technology applications.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.31.3 Learners can access personal counselling services.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, policy documents, evidence of student counselling centre/unit, its structure, functioning, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	1.31.4 The Counselling service provides just in time response for the distance learner	Corporate/Strategic Plan, policy documents, evidence of student counseling centre/unit, its structure, functioning, interaction with students and staff, access to on-line services.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.32 The assessment and evaluation system is reliable and ensures integrity.	1.32.1 The assessment process forms an integral part of teaching and learning and the analysis of assessment outcomes is used to inform curriculum improvements.	Policy documents, minutes of assessment boards/committees, course materials, teaching learning plans, curriculum development committee meetings.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.32.2 Information on the assessment of learning outcomes, assessment procedures and schedules is provided in all course modules / topics	policy documents, minutes of assessment boards/committees, course material, teaching learning plans, curriculum development committee meetings and course materials, programme/course information package, website	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.32.3 A range of formative and summative evaluation methods are included to ensure that student learning is appropriately assessed.	Policy documents, minutes of assessment boards/committees, course material, teaching learning plans, curriculum development committee meetings and course materials, programme/course information package, website	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.32.4 The assessment systems are distance-learner friendly and have effective inbuilt procedures for assessing the achievement of intended learning outcomes.	Policy documents, minutes of assessment boards/committees, course material, teaching learning plans, curriculum development committee meetings and course materials, programme/course information package, website	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.32.5 The assessment strategies are designed and administered in such a manner that they encourage the distance learners to complete the courses.	Policy documents, minutes of assessment boards/committees, course material, teaching learning plans, curriculum development committee meetings and course materials, programme/course information package, website	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	1.32.6 There is a mechanism to ensure that complaints from the learners about the fairness of the assessment and formal appeals against assessment results are dealt with fairly and in a timely manner.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, grievance and redressal committee structure and policy documents and minutes of meetings, minutes of management committee meetings, MIS, website, handbook and interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
1.33 Enquiries and complaints are dealt with quickly, fairly and efficiently.	1.33.1 There is a mechanism to receive enquiries from stakeholders and provide correct and timely information.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, grievances and redressed committee structure and policy documents and minutes of meetings, minutes of management committee meetings.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.33.2 There is a mechanism to deal promptly with complaints received and provide timely redressal	Corporate/Strategic Plan, grievances and redressal committee structure and policy documents and minutes of meetings, minutes of management committee meetings, MIS, website, handbook.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	1.33.3 The composition, terms of reference and decisions of the grievance redressal entity are made known to all thereby ensuring the transparency of the process.	Corporate/Strategic Plan, grievances and redressal committee structure and policy documents and minutes of meetings, minutes of management committee meetings, MIS, website, handbook and interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

Criterion 2 - PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Scope - Programmes are designed and developed to meet the needs of learners, employers and society and to encourage access to quality education. Assessment methods effectively test and measure students' achievement of the stated learning outcomes of the programme.

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Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
2.1 The programmes of the institution reflect the institutional mission, goals and objectives	2.1.1 The offer of programmes is determined in response to national needs and reflects global trends.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme design and development plans, interaction with students and staff, minutes of programme development committee.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	2.1.2 Programmes offered are responsive to changing market needs and designed to achieve the institution's mission.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme design and development plans, interaction with students and staff, minutes of programme development committee.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
2.2 The programme objectives are clearly defined and focus on the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills and their application in professional practice where applicable.	2.2.1 The programmes' stated objectives focus on the needs of the nation, prospective learners, employers and the community.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme objectives, programme materials, Handbook, academic information package, need survey analysis; employer surveys, institutional learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	2.2.2	The objectives of each programme exhibit a clear relationship between the learners' needs (such as entry level skills, knowledge and experience and credit transfers and the media and technology and other facilities and services available to support delivery	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme objectives, programme materials, Handbook, academic information package, need survey analysis; employer surveys, institutional learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	2.2.3	When a programme is aimed at a particular type of occupation or vocation, the objectives of the programme clearly state the type of occupation or vocation and the knowledge, attitudes and skills to be developed during the programme.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme objectives, programme materials, Handbook, academic information package, need survey analysis; employer surveys, institutional learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
2.3	There are clear processes and procedures for programme development and institutional approval.	2.3.1	The procedures for programme development and approval are clearly specified and meet the requirements of the accrediting authorities.	Institution's teaching and learning plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, academic boards and academic review process.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.3.2	The programme development and approval process involves scrutiny by internal and external peers.	Institution's teaching and learning plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, academic boards and academic review process.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.4	Programmes are designed and developed taking into consideration the learners' needs and the resources available to them.	2.4.1	The programmes are developed keeping in view the needs, resources, learning styles, preferences, skills and knowledge base of the learners at the entry level	Institution's teaching and learning plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, academic boards and academic review process, need survey analysis data, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	2.4.2 The programme structure is based on a careful analysis of the availability of the appropriate technologies, the learning environment of students and external accreditation requirements.	Institution's teaching and learning plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, academic boards and academic review process, need survey analysis data, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.5 Programmes are developed and modified in consultation with relevant industry and professional bodies and display sensitivity to changes in social and market demands.	2.5.1 The programmes are developed based on a needs analysis exercise including market research, liaison with industry, review of national priorities and professional needs and reflect the latest developments and practices in the field of study.	Institution's teaching and learning plan, curriculum, course development and accreditation policies, academic boards and academic review process, needs survey data, interaction with staff and students, learning and teaching plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	2.5.2 The institution has mandated mechanisms for review and modification of its programmes in consultation with relevant stakeholders such as employers, industry, education sector, professional bodies, the community, staff and learners .	Learning and teaching plan, academic review processes, employer and stakeholder surveys.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.6 The academic standard of the programmes is appropriate to the level and nature of the award.	2.6.1 The curriculum (expected outcomes, content, teaching and learning strategies and assessment methods of the programme) matches the standards and benchmarks established by national bodies (e.g. accreditation agencies, academic, professional and vocational bodies).	Benchmark statements, learning and teaching plan, accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	2.6.2	The expected outcomes, the content, teaching and learning strategies and assessment methods of the programme are aligned and appropriate to the award and objectives of the programme.	Benchmark statements, learning and teaching plan, accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
2.7	Access to programmes is as open as possible with flexible entry and exit points where applicable.	2.7.1	The access and entry requirements for the programme are open to the extent possible with appropriate recognition for prior knowledge and experience.	Curriculum and programme development and accreditation policies, credit exemption and transfer policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.7.2	Programmes offered by open entry system institutions provide additional academic support to under – prepared learners (e.g. through bridging courses, additional course inputs and increased contact sessions including special sessions for optimizing the use of ICTs).	Institution's documentation of arrangements for teaching support, academic review processes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.7.3	The programme structure is flexible and allows for and encourages lateral entry and exit that leads to progression to higher levels and enables programme diversification.	Institution's documentation of arrangements for teaching support, academic review processes and student data collections, course experience questionnaire, etc.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

2.8	The programmes provide information for learners which includes a description of the aims, objectives and learning outcomes, target groups, teaching-learning processes, means of delivery, support services, scheme of assessment, credit and time requirements.	2.8.1	The Institution provides clear information about its programmes (via its web-site, the media, prospectus and information days) to all prospective learners.	Web-site; prospectus; information package	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.8.2	The institution provides an updated and comprehensive overview of the programme (e.g. aims and objectives , learning outcomes, teaching, learning and delivery processes, support services, schedule of assessment, term requirements, credit transfers and award requirements) to all registered students at the beginning of the academic sessions	Prospectus, Handbook, programme information package, website, interaction with students, student comments through questionnaire	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.8.3	The Prospectus and Student Handbook are easily accessible to all intended users both off-line and on-line.	Prospectus, Handbook, programme information package, website, interaction with students, student comments through questionnaire.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.9	The Programme curriculum reflects current knowledge and practice and is sufficiently comprehensive for learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes..	2.9.1	The content of the programme is up-to-date and reflects current knowledge and practice.	Learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation documents, documents of arrangements for teaching support, academic review processes.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.9.2	The teaching and learning and assessment strategies of the programme are structured to facilitate the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.	Curriculum and course development and accreditation documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

2.10	Programme design and development pays attention to gender equity, multiculturalism, social justice and cohesion, ethical values and environmental sustainability.	2.10.1 Issues of national and global priority such as gender, equity, inclusion, diversity, environment, social justice values and ethics are integrated into the curriculum.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme objectives, programme materials, handbook, academic information package, need survey analysis; employer surveys, institution learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.10.2 Where appropriate, credit bearing activities based on issues such as gender, equity, ethics and values, human rights and social justice are incorporated in the programme.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; programme objectives, programme materials, Handbook, academic information package, need survey analysis; employer surveys, institution learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.11	The programmes provide sufficient flexibility for learner choices in the courses.	2.11.1 Sufficient elective courses from outside the major discipline are available for learners to choose a pathway through the programme that meets their needs.	Learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies and documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.11.2 The interdisciplinary approach to programme design also makes possible the lateral movement of the learners to other programmes at various levels.	Institutional learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies and documents, corporate plan, handbook, admission and enrollment policies.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
2.12	The programmes are evaluated on the basis of the learners' achievement of the intended learning outcomes.	2.12.1 Programme evaluation and monitoring is undertaken at regular intervals.	Learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, documentation of arrangements for teaching support, academic review policies, good practices statements.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		2.12.2 There is a regular and structured feedback mechanism in place to obtain feedback from learners, teachers, employers and the community about the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its objectives	Academic review processes, good practice statements, feedback forms, database, data on focus group discussions and workshops.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	<p>2.12.3 The feedback from the learners and employers, as well as application and registration data, student assessment results and graduate employment outcomes form the basis of the evaluation of programme performance against its stated objectives.</p>	<p>Learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, documentation of arrangements for teaching support, academic review policies, good practice statements. Surveys of students and employers' opinions of attitudes and responsiveness, student and employer comments through questionnaires.</p>	<p><b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
	<p>2.12.4 The outcomes of the evaluation are used to make necessary changes and improvements to programme design and delivery.</p>	<p>Learning and teaching plan, curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, documentation of arrangements for teaching support, academic review policies, good practice statements. surveys of students and employers' opinions of attitudes and responsiveness, student and employer comments through questionnaire. evidence of incorporation of the feedback, interaction with staff and students.</p>	<p><b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
<p>2.13 Learner satisfaction relative to the quality of education and training provided in the programmes is regularly evaluated.</p>	<p>2.13.1 The institution has a mechanism to survey learner satisfaction rates with reference to the service providers, the programme delivery and the commitment of the institution to meeting the learners' needs.</p>	<p>Corporate/Strategic Plan, means of tapping student and staff opinion, data from test audits of student administration, surveys of student opinions of student services, documents reporting the efficiency of student services, corporate/strategic plan, programme/course experience questionnaire data.</p>	<p><b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>
	<p>2.13.2 The survey of learner satisfaction levels is conducted at regular intervals in a transparent manner.</p>	<p>Means of tapping student and staff opinion, data from test audits of student administration, surveys of student opinions of student services, documents reporting the efficiency of student services, corporate/strategic plan, programme/course experience questionnaire data, procedure used for surveys.</p>	<p><b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○</p>

	<p>2.13.3 The outcomes of the learner satisfaction surveys are considered positively, recorded appropriately and used promptly to improve the programme.</p>	<p>Means of tapping student and staff opinion, data from test audits of student administration, surveys of student opinions of student services, documents reporting the efficiency of student services, corporate/strategic plan, programme/course experience questionnaire data.</p>	<p><b>0 1 2 3 4</b>  <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/></p>
	<p>2.13.4 The institution promptly informs staff and learners of the outcomes of the survey and the actions taken in response to feedback received.</p>	<p>Documentation on communication of information to staff and students.</p>	<p><b>0 1 2 3 4</b>  <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/></p>

### Criterion 3 - COURSE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

**Scope** - A course is a component of a broader programme of study. The course content is underpinned by research. The course material clearly presents objectives and learning outcomes, content, approaches to teaching-learning and assessment and learner support. There is an identified process of development and review of courses.

Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
3.1 The courses are designed according to the stated programme objectives.	3.1.1 Course design is focused on national and international priorities and trends and the needs of prospective learners and employers.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff, professional accrediting bodies, governments, and employers.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	3.1.2 Courses reflect current developments and knowledge in the relevant field of study.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and employers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	3.1.3 The design of individual courses contributes to achieving the overall programme objectives.	Programme and course objectives and course materials.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

3.2	Course design takes into consideration and incorporates recent advances in Information and Communication Technology.	3.2.1	The choice of media and the technology to be used is appropriately integrated in the course design.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers. Course team includes Information Technology personnel.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.2.2	The choice of media and technology takes into account the range of media and infrastructural support that the institution can make available to its learners.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, Discussion with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.2.3	Course design reflects institutional policy on Information and Communication Technology for learning.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, Corporate Plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.2.4	There is a visible link between learners' needs and the features of the technology selected for course delivery which is aimed at motivating the learners in the use of that technology.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers. Findings of need surveys and student feedback	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.3	Courses are designed based on learner-centered principles.	3.3.1	Teaching/learning strategies to be employed, teaching methods, learner activities, use of appropriate ICTs and contact sessions are determined as part of the course design process	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students and staff, observation of contact sessions.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	3.3.2	The teaching/learning methods are consciously planned and monitored keeping in view different learner abilities and needs.	Course materials, information package, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	3.3.3	The teaching/learning strategies are clearly stated in the course book and communicated and discussed with the learners.	Course materials, information package, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
3.4	The course has ample scope for encouraging and developing creative and critical thinking, independent and lifelong learning and interpersonal communication and team work skills.	3.4.1	Learning activities are designed to contribute to the development of the specified generic skills	Course materials, information package, assessment and evaluation scheme, assignments and question papers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.5	Standard formats for instructional design and development are in place and are followed.	3.5.1	Templates are designed and developed for effective instructional design and efficient course development.	Course templates and course materials.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.5.2	The institution provides prior training and necessary inputs to the staff involved in instructional design and development.	Minutes for the course planning and course design committees, interaction with staff and course developers, training materials and feedback data.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.5.3	The institution adheres to the agreed formalities and templates to be used for instructional design and development.	Minutes for the course planning and course design committees, Course materials.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

3.6. Instructional design recognizes diversity of learners' learning contexts and learning styles, and ensures realistic scheduling of activities.	3.6.1 The instructional design template requires the use of inclusive language and provides a variety of activities that accommodate different learning styles, circumstances and preferences.	Course materials, information package, interaction with students, staff and course developers, research studies on student feedback.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	3.6.2. Scheduling of activities addresses the needs of distance learners and their access to technology and other facilities.	Course materials, information package, year planner, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.7 The course development process incorporates a range of relevant expertise.	3.7.1 Courses are developed with contributions from experts in the academic subject area, in instructional design and in course delivery.	Course materials, information package, year planning, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	3.7.2 Course development is based on a plan that details the processes, timelines, finance, infrastructural requirements, resources and roles and responsibilities of people involved.	Minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with staff and course developers, training materials and feedback data.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.8 Instructional design includes assessment of learning against stated learning outcomes	3.8.1 Learning outcomes are clearly stated. Assessment is designed to measure achievement of learning outcomes in terms of defined criteria.	Course materials, information package, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers. Results of development testing.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

3.9	Course design uses appropriate technology to engage and support learners and to provide communication facilities.	3.9.1	Appropriate technology is used to engage and support learners	Technology profiles of the institutions, stock books, user records, information packages or brochures, interaction with teachers, staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.9.2	Communication with learners uses the technologies that are most accessible to the learners such as the internet, mobile phone, telephone, television and radio.	Technology profiles of the institutions, stock books, user records, information packages or brochures, interaction with teachers, staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.9.3	The institution analyses the ease of use and level of technology available to the learners.	Feedback of students, students' profiles including access to technology, institutional data base, interaction with students and teachers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.10	A complete instructional package includes course description, syllabus, course plans, learning outcomes, details of assessments and evaluations, completion requirements, course material including multimedia supplementary learning resources, interactive course activities, community building activities and assessments, texts and media, materials and information to demonstrate the appropriate scope, sequence and depth of each course in relation to the stated goals and objectives.	3.10.1	The instructional package is comprehensive and contains a learner friendly description of the syllabus, course plans, learning outcomes assessment and evaluation details, credit hours, teaching/learning strategies, learning packages (study materials study guides, audio/video material, CD ROMs and online texts) and also the annual calendar of activities.	Instructional package, interaction with students and teachers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.10.2	The instructional package is made available (both off-line and on-line) to all registered learners and staff ahead of the courses offering.	Instructional package, interaction with students and teachers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	3.10.3	The instructional package is reviewed, evaluated and updated regularly through a systematic process.	Instructional package, interaction with students and teachers, institutional data base, minutes of review committees.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
3.11	A variety of learning activities is provided in the course to encourage active learning, collaborative learning and self-assessment.	3.11.1	Appropriate learning strategies such as experiential learning, collaborative learning and personal learning are designed into the course.	Course materials, information package, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with students, staff and course developers.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.11.2	The institution systematically records and assesses the effectiveness and impact of learning strategies.	Minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with staff and course developers, training material and feedback data.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.12	Appropriate personnel and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of course materials and their production processes.  "	3.12.1	Roles and responsibilities for quality assurance in course materials design, development and production are clearly specified	Course policy documents and approval records	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.12.2	The institution has a mechanism to ensure the relevant competence of the content developers, technical and support staff and others involved in course design, development and production.	Recruitment policy, procedures, training plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.12.3	Technical and production standards in course design, development and production are clearly specified	Programme/Course design manual	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	3.12.4	The course materials developed are pilot-tested and quality assured with reference to the aims and objectives of the programme and learners' needs prior to field release.	Minute of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with staff and course developers and feedback data, evidence for editing, moderating, peer-review, pilot testing feedback and modification.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	3.12.5	The institution obtains regular feedback from tutors on the course materials, with reference to their user friendliness, appropriateness and effectiveness.	Various formats for feedback, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with tutors.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	3.12.6	The feedback is utilized in improving the course materials and assuring their quality.	Various formats for feedback, data base, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, interaction with tutors, staff and course developers, comparison of course materials before and after feedback.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
3.13	Mechanisms for adoption and adaptation are established to encourage linkages with national and international agencies for course design, development and delivery.	3.13.1	There are MOUs with national and international agencies to share good quality materials which demonstrate good practice in course design, review of materials, development and delivery.	Policy documents, MOUs, minutes of course development committees, executive bodies and interaction with staff and management.  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		3.13.2	The institution has linkages with national and international agencies to exchange expertise for content development and delivery methods.	Policy documents, MOUs, minutes of course development committees, executive bodies and interaction with staff and management.  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	3.13.3 The institution has established mechanisms and flexibility for sharing technology and other facilities for efficient delivery of the course.	Policy documents, MOUs, minutes of course development committees, executive bodies and interaction with staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	3.13.4 The institution has a policy relating to the use of Open Educational Resources	Policy documents	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

Criterion 4 - LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

Scope - The institution has adequate and appropriate infrastructure facilities to conduct quality academic programmes through distance education. The institution uses technological innovations in educational transactions for enriching the learning experiences it provides to students and manages the institution in a technology enabled way for effective institutional functioning.

Criteria Statements	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
4.1 Sufficient, qualified and skilled academic, staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for the learners.	4.1.1 Human resource planning forms an integral part of programme and course development.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles.	0. Fails meet criterion 1. Not satisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	4.1.2 The institution ensures the recruitment of sufficient suitably qualified academic staff	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	4.1.3 The institution maintains the student/teacher ratios at the planned level and conforms to the standards of the regulatory agencies.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles, MIS, national/accreditation agency norms.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	4.1.4	The institutional human resource plan lays emphasis on providing adequate numbers of teaching staff and staff at the tutoring level to meet the needs of the students.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles, MIS.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	4.1.5	The institution provides teaching development programmes at regular intervals to improve the skills and knowledge of teaching and tutoring staff.	Staff development training schedules; feedback forms from trainees.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
4.2. Sufficient, qualified and experienced administrative staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for the learners.	4.2.1	Planned administrative staff strength is sufficient to coordinate and supervise the various activities of the institution.	Organogram, Corporate/Strategic Plan, details of staffing structure of administration unit, individual staff profiles of admin unit; institution planning and HR documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	4.2.2	The institution ensures that the administrative staff employed have the relevant skills and experience to deal with the learners and academic and other staff, , of the institution and its outreach centres.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles, staff training and development schedules and manuals; interaction with staff, performance appraisal forms feedback.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
4.3. Sufficient, qualified technical and support staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for student learning.	4.3.1	The institution employs sufficient qualified and experienced support and technical staff to support the delivery of programmes and courses to learners.	Organogram, Corporate/Strategic Plan, details of staffing structure of administration unit, individual staff profiles of admin unit; institution planning and HR documents.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	4.3.2	The institution ensures that the support and technical staff employed have the required qualifications, skills and experience to handle specialized tasks.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles, staff training and development schedules and manuals; interaction with staff, performance appraisal forms feedback.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	4.3.3	The institution provides training at regular intervals to improve the skills and knowledge of technical and support staff.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; institution planning and human resource (HR) documents (including recruitment, retention, promotion, performance management, career development, records), individual staff profiles, staff training and development schedules and manuals; interaction with staff, performance appraisal forms feedback.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
4.4	The responsibilities and job descriptions of staff are clearly specified and respond to the learning needs of the students enrolled in the programme.	4.4.1	Duties, responsibilities and workload of all categories of staff are clearly specified in job descriptions.	University planning and HR documents, individual staff profiles, university policies and reporting procedures, especially those for staff appraisal counseling, development and monitoring, job descriptions of staff, programme descriptions.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		4.4.2	The workload of staff conforms to the work norms agreed upon by the institution.	Work norms and job descriptions of staff; individual staff profiles, performance appraisal data.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		4.4.3	Functional responsibilities of individual staff with regard to course development, course delivery, counseling, assessment, tutorial support, monitoring and management and administration of the system are clearly specified and communicated to all staff.	Learning and teaching plan; curriculum and course development and accreditation policies, roles and responsibilities of staff; promotion and reward systems for staff; documentation of arrangements for teaching support; academic boards and review process, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
4.5	Quality of performance is recognized for selection and promotion of all categories of staff.	4.5.1	The institution evaluates the performance of the staff at regular intervals through annual self appraisal reports, confidential reports and learner feedback on courses and teaching.	Student and staff comment through questionnaires, focus groups, structured telephone interviews, annual appraisal reports, confidential reports, staff service records, agenda and minutes of performance review committees	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	4.5.2	The outcomes of performance evaluation are communicated to and discussed with the staff concerned with the aim of improving their performance.	Student and staff feedback questionnaires, focus groups, structured telephone interviews, annual appraisal reports, confidential reports, staff service records, agenda and minutes of performance review committees	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	4.5.3	The institution provides training and staff development programmes to improve the performance of the staff and contribute to their continuous development..	HR development plan, training schedules and manuals; feedback data on evaluation of training workshop, performance review after training, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	4.5.4	The institution has a scheme for rewarding good performance by providing incentives, promotions, rewards, special benefits, research grants, and sponsorship..	Institutional planning and HR documents particularly policies for promotion, reward, tenure and performance management, minutes of management committee meetings, budget allocations, awards given.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
4.6 There is an effective human resource development system to train, retain and motivate the employees for the roles and tasks they perform, particularly with respect to the application of appropriate new technologies.	4.6.1	Training is provided to all categories of staff in all aspects of the application of new technologies.	HR policy documents; technology policy documents; technology committee meeting minutes, training in technology data and manual, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	4.6.2	There is provision for training and retraining staff at frequent intervals in the use of equipment, facilities, and new technologies.	HR policy documents; technology policy documents; technology committee meeting minutes, training in technology data and manual, interaction with staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

4.7	There is an effective employee welfare system.	4.7.1	Conditions of service include welfare provision that responds to employee's needs and is in line with market norms.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; policy documents, ordinance, act, service conditions, budgetary allocations, employer/employee union constitutions, roles and responsibilities of welfare unit staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		4.7.2	There is a designated welfare officer or unit to coordinate and monitor implementation of the various welfare schemes for staff.	Corporate/Strategic Plan; policy documents, ordinance, act, service conditions, budgetary allocations, employer/employee union constitutions, roles and responsibilities of welfare unit staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		4.7.3	There is a well-documented mechanism for staff grievance redressal.	Corporate/strategic plan; policy documents, ordinance, act, service conditions, budgetary allocations, employer/employee union constitutions, roles and responsibilities of welfare unit staff, evidence of implementation of the mechanism.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>



Criterion 5 - LEARNER SUPPORT AND PROGRESSION

Scope - Learners are supported by the provision of a range of opportunities for tutoring at a distance through the use of various forms of technology. Contact tutoring, assignment tutoring, mentoring, counseling, and the stimulation of peer support structures to facilitate their holistic progression.

Criteria Statements	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
5.1 Learner support is considered during programme development and is built into the design of the programme and course materials.	5.1.1 Sufficient contact sessions are planned and integrated into the course design.	Information pack, year planner, schedules, course materials.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	5.1.2 Mandatory attendance at contact sessions is fixed at a minimum desired level.	Information pack, prospectus, handbook, student information materials, MIS, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	5.1.3 The support of individual learners is built into the design of course materials.	Information pack, prospectus, handbook, student information materials, MIS, interaction with staff and students, feedback from students	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	5.1.4 Peer support mechanisms are built into the course materials.	Information pack, year planner, schedules, course materials, MIS, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	5.1.5	The institution provides on-going support for learner progression across courses within a programme of study.	Policy documents, student data bases, details on monitoring, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.2. Learner support is provided using a range of media including appropriate ICTs	5.2.1	The institution uses a range of media to provide support and guidance to learners.	Information pack, year planner, schedules, course materials, MIS, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.2.2	Adequate administrative and technical support is given to tutors to enable them to provide individual academic support for learners.	Information pack, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, interaction with staff and students.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.3. Tutors are selected and trained for their roles as facilitators of learning.	5.3.1	There is a specified set of criteria (qualifications, experience) and procedures for the recruitment of tutors.	Recruitment policies, institution rules and regulations, interactions with management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.3.2	The institution adheres to the recruitment criteria.	Recruitment policies, institution's rules and regulations, minutes of recruitment committees, interactions with management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.3.3	Induction and orientation training programmes are conducted for tutors before the commencement of the course.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, training schedules, training materials, interaction with staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.3.4	There is a mechanism for monitoring the performance of tutors which informs future training programmes.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, training schedules, training materials, interaction with staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	5.3.5	The good performance of tutors is identified and rewarded.	Institution's rules and regulations, interaction with staff and management, minutes of the staff development committees.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.4.1 Tutorial group size allows for support to be provided to learners in various ways	5.4.1	The tutor/learner ratio enables tutors to provide individual support to learners and monitor their progress to completion.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.4.2	The tutor/learner ratio enables tutors to work with small groups of learners and facilitate problem solving.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.5.1 Learners have access to the tutors through a variety of media and locations.	5.5.1	The learners have access to the tutors at fixed centres and can also reach them through various modes such as by telephone, appointment, e-mail, on-line discussion and video conferencing.	Interaction with staff and students, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.5.2	There is provision for contact sessions specifically for learners entering courses through open access.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.6 The turnaround of assignments ensures timely feedback	5.6.1	There is a specified procedure to receive, record, process and return marked assignments to learners.	Institution's rules and regulations, interaction with staff and management, minutes of the staff committees, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	5.6.2	The specific time frame to return assignments allows learners to benefit from formative feedback.	Institution's rules and regulations, minutes of the staff committees, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.6.3	There is adequate time for moderation of marked assignments within the overall time frame.	Institution's rules and regulations, interaction with staff and management, minutes of the staff committees, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.6.4	Procedures for receiving, recording, processing and returning assignments are regularly monitored.	Institution's rules and regulations, interaction with staff and management, minutes of the staff committees, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.7	Academic, administrative and technical staff facilitate learner success.	5.7.1	The institution employs sufficient and qualified academic staff as tutors and provides professional training and development opportunities to them.	Conditions and criteria for appointment and promotion; staff training and development plan <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.7.2	The institution employs sufficient and competent administrative staff to support learners.	Conditions and criteria for appointment and promotion; staff training and development plan <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.7.3	The institution employs sufficient and competent technical staff to respond to learner needs.	Conditions and criteria for appointment and promotion; staff training and development plan <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.7.4	The institution has robust and extensive systems that underpin learner support.	Policy on outreach and learner support; work plan of outreach centres. <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	5.7.5	The institution emphasizes service orientation in the training of its staff.	Staff training plan; Performance appraisal document.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	
5.8	There are mechanisms to follow up and support learners throughout the duration of their study.	5.8.1	Academic and personal counseling is provided to the learners.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		5.8.2	Roles and responsibilities for academic and personal counselling are clearly specified.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		5.8.3	The institution provides specific guidelines, monitoring systems, personnel and institutional spaces to facilitate programmes requiring practical experience.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, placement records, placement cell activity files, information package, interaction with management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
5.9	Appropriate support and facilities are provided for learners with specific learning difficulties.	5.9.1	The institution identifies and responds to learners with specific learning difficulties.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff, physical facilities and library visits.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		5.9.2	The institution provides materials and services in multiple formats to meet learners' needs.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, Materials, physical facilities and library visits	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
		5.9.3	The tutors, administrative and technical staff are provided with necessary training to address the needs of learners with specific learning difficulties.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff, training records.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

	5.9.4	The institution has a mechanism to make special concessions to learners with specific learning difficulties.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.10. Learner support emphasizes the development of independent learning skills.	5.10.1	The institution provides orientation to the learners on the desired learning skills for pursuing the programme.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.10.2	There is appropriate guidance and support structures empowering the learners to acquire the skills for independent learning.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.11 Opportunities are provided for academic and social peer interaction.	5.11.1	The institution has support structures that provide opportunities for peer interaction which empower the learners to share knowledge and information and develop interactive and collaborative learning skills.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.12 Measures for feedback and monitoring of learner support services are in place.	5.12.1	Regular and systematic monitoring of learner support services for continuous improvement takes place.	Minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	5.12.2	Feedback from learners on support services is regularly solicited and acted upon. Learners are advised of changes resulting from their input.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

5.13	Staff are trained and have a positive attitude towards learner-centred provisions and effectively and efficiently handle the learner-support services.	5.13.1 Staff are trained to handle the various support services provided to the learners such as equipment, technology, physical and infrastructural facilities and communication and information systems.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff, training records.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.13.2 There are appropriate guidance and support structures empowering the staff to use appropriate technology and other support provisions to facilitate effective and efficient learning by the students.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff, training records.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.13.3 Training of support staff includes service orientation. Support staff are empowered to make decisions in pursuit of learner-oriented services.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff, training records.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
5.14	The institution has mechanisms to facilitate student progression from one level of education to the next higher level successfully and towards gainful employment.	5.14.1 Learners are advised of opportunities to progress into higher level studies.	Institution's rules and regulations, student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, year planner, schedules, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.14.2 Career guidance advice is provided for learners.	Interaction with students	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.14.3 The programmes of the institution provide opportunities for the learners to progress both vertically and horizontally.	Student handbook, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, course materials, interaction with staff, students and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	5.14.4	Progression and completion rates are monitored in relation to institutional and national targets.	Results, Progression rates, MIS, Data Base, national performance data	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	5.14.5	Performance of past learners is monitored to inform programme revisions.	Institution's rules and regulations, information package, interaction with staff, students and alumni. Tracer studies	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	5.14.6	There is a positive employer perception of graduates.	Results, MIS, Data Base, Employer feedback, Tracer Studies	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
5.15	Learner support systems target retention	5.15.1	Retention rates are monitored against targets	Results, MIS, Database, retention rates in relation to programmes and courses	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.15.2	Preventative support provided in initial courses	Results, MIS, Database, retention rates in relation to programmes and courses, student feedback	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		5.15.3	Remedial interventions are provided throughout the programmes for learners at risk of failure	Materials and services related to remedial interventions, student feedback	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

## Criterion 6 - LEARNER ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

**Scope** - Assessment is an essential feature of the teaching and learning process, is properly managed, and reflects institutional and national and international standards. The institution publishes its academic grading policy and applies it with fairness and consistency. Evaluation is based on the stated programme objectives.

Criteria Statements	Performance Indicators	Sources of Evidence	Measure
6.1 The teaching - learning processes of the institution include formative as well as summative assessment.	6.1.1 The assessment outcomes are used to inform teaching methods and improve the curriculum.	Course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, MIS, database, interaction with students, staff and employers.	0. Fails to meet criterion 1. Unsatisfactory 2. Marginal 3. Good 4. Excellent  <b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	6.1.2 There is a range of assessment tasks and methods for validating learning outcomes in each course	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
	6.1.3 There is transparency, fairness and consistency in the assessment system	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the examination, evaluation and moderation committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

6.2	Assessment is aligned with stated learning outcomes.	6.2.1	Assessment tasks undertaken by the learners test the stated learning outcomes.	Institution's objectives, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.2.2	The assessment workload is appropriately linked to the level and credit requirements of the course.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
6.3.	Learners are informed about the different types of assessment and assessment techniques for the course.	6.3.1	The course information package provides the details of the assessment, the assessment techniques, the intended learning outcomes and timelines.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, constitution, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.3.2	Induction and orientation programmes for learners at course commencement provide information on assessment expectations.	Induction programmes, schedules, year planner, student handbook, information package, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
6.4.	There are systems for the tracking and recording of the learners' performance and progress and a timely communication of the same to the learners.	6.4.1	Procedures for both formative and summative assessment ensure consistency and accuracy of marking / and grading and provide timely feedback to learners.	Institution's rules and regulations, constitution, student handbook, information package, MIS, interaction with administrators, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.4.2	All summative assessment grades are accurately recorded on the learner's record and are communicated promptly.	Institution's rules and regulations, constitution, student handbook, information package, MIS, interaction with administrators, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.4.3	Formative assessment enables the learners to receive objective feedback on their performance.	MIS, interaction with administrators, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

6.5	The processes of assessment satisfy the requirements of institutional policy and other appropriate accreditation bodies.	6.5.1	There are quality assurance mechanisms in place to ensure a fair and reliable assessment of learners as stated in the institutional policy.	Quality assurance mechanisms and policies of the institution, policy documents, corporate plans, records on QA.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.5.2	The marking schemes are aligned and are consistent with those of other national agencies and accreditation bodies.	Institution's rules and regulations, policy documents, selection procedures, minutes of the examination, evaluation and moderation committees, schedules and content of orientation programmes, feedback data, interaction with the staff and management.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.5.3	The standards and quality of assessment are rigorously monitored and maintained	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the examination evaluation and moderation committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.5.4	The institution has standardized tutor marking schemes	Institution's rules and regulations, performance evaluation reports, review committee minutes, MIS, interaction with administrators, management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.5.5	The institution holds regular standardization meetings with tutors and course coordinators.	Institution's rules and regulations, performance evaluation reports, review committee schedules and minutes, MIS, interaction with administrators, management and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
6.6	The institution ensures the security of assessment processes	6.6.1	Arrangements for locally administered summative assessments are secure	Manual of examination procedures; Examination By- Laws	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.6.2	Procedures are in place to ensure the security of identity and of personal information during the assessment process	Manual of examination procedures; Examination By- Laws	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	6.6.3	Assessment results are recorded securely and reliably and are available to learners	Manual of examination procedures; Examination By- Laws;interaction with students	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
	6.6.4	Arrangements are in place to ensure that the integrity of the certification processes is not compromised	Manual of examination procedures; Examination By- Laws	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
6.7	National and international benchmarks guide assessment.	6.7.1	The internal quality assurance processes and assessment standards are correlated with the requirements of relevant governmental and accreditation agencies.	Quality assurance mechanisms and policies of the institution, policy documents, corporate plans, records on QA, QA mechanisms of relevant regulatory bodies	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.7.2	The institution makes reference to practice in other similar institutions to benchmark its assessment standards.	Quality assurance mechanisms and policies of the institution, policy documents, corporate plans, records on QA, QA mechanisms of relevant regulatory bodies, institution's rules and regulations.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
6.8	Detailed marking schemes are provided to all examiners.	6.8.1	There is a procedure for selection and orientation of the examiners on the marking schemes to ensure consistency.	Institution's rules and regulations, policy documents, selection procedures, minutes of the examination, evaluation and moderation committees, schedules and contents of orientation programmes, feedback data, interactions with the staff and management	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.8.2	There are procedures to ensure that examiners apply the marking scheme in a consistent manner.	Quality assurance mechanisms and policies of the institution, policy documents, corporate plans, records on QA, QA mechanisms of relevant regulatory bodies and institution's rules and regulations.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	6.8.3	The assessment strategy of the institution has provision for internal and external moderation.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, constitution, minutes of the grievance and disciplinary committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	
6.9	Appropriate measures are in place to ensure the integrity of assessment.	6.9.1	The learners are made aware of ethical practices and code of conduct for submission of assignments and project work and for sitting examinations	Institution's rules and regulations, code of conduct and ethical practices, constitution, minutes of the grievance and disciplinary committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.9.2	There is a clearly stated disciplinary procedure for handling malpractices and violation of code of conduct and ethical standards relating to copying, plagiarism, reproduction of open source materials and Intellectual Property Rights.	Institution's rules and regulations, code of conduct and ethical practices, constitution, minutes of the grievance and disciplinary committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.9.3	The institution adheres to the disciplinary procedure and initiates timely and justifiable disciplinary action wherever applicable.	Institution's rules and regulations, code of conduct and ethical practices, constitution, minutes of the grievance and disciplinary committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.9.4	There is provision for grievance redressal and appeals.	Institution's rules and regulations, code of conduct and ethical practices, constitution, minutes of the grievance and disciplinary committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

6.10	Assessment results are documented and communicated without delay to all learners.	6.10.1	At the beginning of every academic session, the institution decides and communicates to the students the timelines for assessment and the publication of results.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff and corporate plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.10.2	The institution adheres to the scheduled timelines	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff and corporate plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.10.3	The institution ensures transparency in assessment by communicating the procedures and processes through various media and through the appeals and grievance redressal mechanism.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
		6.10.5	The institution adheres to the timelines for the distribution of grades and transcripts.	Institution's rules and regulations, course materials, minutes of the course planning and course design committees, student handbook, information package, interaction with management, students and staff and corporate plan.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
6.11	Learner satisfaction with the programme is appropriately measured.	6.11.1	Learner satisfaction rates are regularly collected and disseminated.	Results, MIS, database.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
6.12	Graduation rates are aligned with institutional and national targets.	6.12.1	Completion rates of learners are aligned with the institutional targets.	Results, MIS, database.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

	6.12.2 Completion, retention and progression rates are monitored on a continuous basis.	Institution's rules and regulations, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, course materials, interaction with staff, students and alumni.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	6.12.3 The institution has a mechanism for reviewing the effectiveness of the processes and the overall performance of the assessment system.	Institution's rules and regulations, information package, minutes of the course coordinators' meetings, feedback, course materials, interaction with staff, students and alumni.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	6.12.4 The institution provides periodic reports on academic performance to stakeholders including employers	Management Information System, database, website, advocacy materials, advertisements.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
	6.12.5 The institution publishes the results of annual surveys of graduate employment.	Management Information System, database, website, advocacy materials, advertisements	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>



Contextualisation

Eg.

“Agriculture”



Criterion 1 - VISION, MISSION AND PLANNING

Scope - The institution determines its own mission and objectives that reflect its academic commitments and the needs of society.

Criteria Standards		Performance Indicators	
1.1	The institution has a stated vision and mission that is supported by specific and clearly defined goals and objectives within the context of national development priorities and the latest international trends.	1.1.1	The vision and mission are relevant to national development priorities.
		1.1.2	The vision and mission reflect the latest international trends in education.
		1.1.3	The vision and mission are made known to all stakeholders.
		1.1.4	The specific goals and objectives are clearly defined and relevant to the institutional context.
1.2	The mission statement and objectives are regularly reviewed and revised by the institution.	1.2.1	The institution has a process in place for obtaining feedback from stakeholders.
		1.2.2	The feedback is systematically analysed and made available to the senior institutional decision makers to make the necessary revisions to the objectives and plans of the institution.
		1.2.3	The senior management reviews the activities of the institution and their appropriateness and assesses their alignment with the needs of the stakeholders and the institution's mission and objectives. It makes necessary changes wherever appropriate.
1.3	Policy statements and action plans to fulfill the stated mission are formulated for all operations and incorporated into the institutional Strategic Plan	1.3.1	The institution has a Strategic Plan in place which provides a basis for all key activities of the institution.
		1.3.2	The institution has a Strategic Plan which is appropriately aligned to the institutional vision and mission.
1.4	The policy and planning are supported by need analysis, research inputs and stakeholder consultations	1.4.1	The institution assigns responsibility for conducting systematic research and evaluation of its performance and for communicating the results to senior management and key stakeholders.
		1.4.2	The policies of the institution are based on and regularly reviewed in the light of the institutional research data.

1.5	The institution has systematic and transparent procedures for planning and development to achieve its stated objectives.	1.5.1	The planning process is clearly defined, fair and open to relevant stakeholders.
		1.5.2	The institution ensures that the stakeholders are aware of the institution's objectives and of the role they are expected to play in achieving them.
1.6	Relevant stakeholder groups are represented in the policy formulation process to ensure ownership and to facilitate feedback and openness	1.6.1	The institution ensures wide representation of the stakeholders in all its decision making bodies.
		1.6.2	The institution adopts a participatory approach through a process of regular and continuous feedback loops with its stakeholders.
1.7	Implementation plans of the institution are documented and effectively communicated to the relevant stakeholders	1.7.1	Responsibility for implementation and operationalisation of institutional plans is clearly documented, defined and communicated to the relevant staff.
		1.7.2	Staff are briefed on the relevant plans and on their role in the implementation processes.
1.8	There are monitoring and evaluation procedures to ensure that the policies and plans of the institution are implemented, evaluated and improved from time to time	1.8.1	Internal mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the stated policies and plans are in place.
		1.8.2	The various data and information obtained through monitoring and evaluation are considered and reviewed by the senior management to initiate necessary improvements.
1.9	The institution demonstrates its drive to develop itself into a Centre of Excellence and maintains nationally and internationally comparable and acceptable standards	1.9.1	The institutional plans and policies reflect national and international concerns.
		1.9.2	The institutional plans and policies are continuously updated to meet national and international requirements.
		1.9.3	The institution ensures quality and cost effective access to learners.
1.10	The institution's commitment to learners is documented and made available to all stakeholders.		The institution has clearly stated and documented procedures / processes reflecting its commitment to its learners.
		1.10.2	The institution has clearly stated and documented processes for evaluating its achievements in terms of commitment to its learners.
		1.10.3	The institution disseminates factual information on its commitment to learners.
1.11	There are effective and appropriate appeal mechanisms for all constituents of the institution.	1.11.1	The institution has transparent appeal mechanisms and ensures timely, justified redressal of grievances.
		1.11.2	The details of the appeal policies and procedures are readily accessible to all staff and learners.
1.12	The institution's commitment to diversity and inclusion is reflected in its admission policy and learner profiles.	1.12.2	The institution publishes clear policies on the admission of local and overseas students.

	1.12.2	The admission process is transparent and is made available for scrutiny by relevant stakeholders.	
	1.12.3	The institution makes special provision to ensure equity and access to disadvantaged groups within its target student population.	
1.13	The institution has a stated policy on partnerships and collaborations.	1.13.1	The institution has a clearly identified policy that provides the basis for collaborative relationships and partnerships involving public – private - governmental and non-governmental agencies for the development and delivery of quality programmes.
		1.13.2	There are specified criteria for establishing collaborations and partnerships and for monitoring and evaluating their effectiveness with reference to defined performance indicators.
1.14	The institution has a clear policy on ethical practices and ensures its implementation in all its activities.	1.14.1	The institution has a defined code of conduct and ethical standards for all levels of staff and activities.
		1.14.2	Management, staff and learners are made aware of the defined code of conduct and ethical standards and adhere to it.
		1.14.3	Violation of the code of conduct and ethical standards is viewed seriously and is supported by disciplinary action.
		1.14.4	Procedures to initiate disciplinary action for violation of the code of conduct and ethical standards are well publicized and strictly adhered to.
1.15	The institution has a stated policy for financial support for enrolled students.	1.15.1	There is a clear and transparent policy for the administration of financial support to students, including scholarships, bursaries, fees and reimbursements.
		1.15.2	The institution monitors the implementation of the policy on financial support to students.
		1.15.3	The institution regularly reviews the financial disbursements to students and takes necessary steps for timely disbursements.
1.16	The institution has a stated policy with regard to quality assurance and monitoring in all aspects of its operations.	1.16.1	There is an integrated framework to ensure the quality of the academic and administrative activities of the institution.
		1.16.4	There are clearly stipulated internal quality assurance processes for both administrative and academic activities.

		1.16.5	Internal quality assurance mechanisms are aligned with the requirements of the relevant external quality assurance agencies.
		1.16.6	Quality assurance policies are effectively communicated to all the constituents of the institution.
1.17	There is a system for implementing and reviewing the quality assurance procedures of the institution.	1.17.1	The institution undertakes quality reviews/ audits at regular intervals and ensures the quality of all activities.
		1.17.2	The institution constantly monitors and reviews the effectiveness of its quality assurance procedures. The outcomes are used to improve implementation strategies.
		1.17.3	The institution provides training to its staff for effective implementation of the quality assurance procedures.
1.18	The stated primary purpose of the institution's quality assurance policy and procedures is to achieve quality enhancement.	1.18.1	Quality enhancement is identified as a goal of the quality assurance policy.
		1.18.2	Specific improvement targets are identified for each activity subjected to monitoring and review.
1.19	The institution has a policy for the effective use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT).	1.19.1	The institution has provisions at various policy levels for the planning, acquisition, deployment, maintenance and use of appropriate technologies including the latest Information and Communication Technologies.
		1.19.2	There are procedures for monitoring the implementation of Information and Communication Technology policies.
1.20	The institution provides timely, accurate and clear instructions regarding its credit transfer policies and practices.	1.20.1	There is an effective and accountable mechanism for the communication and dissemination of information about credit transfer policies and practices at all levels.
		1.20.2	There is efficient administrative and academic support for the implementation of the institution's credit transfer policies.
1.21	When the institution engages another agency, in part or full, it takes steps to ensure the academic quality and integrity of all educational services offered in its name.	1.21.1	Quality management mechanisms are in place at the institution to ensure that the content offered by external providers is of good quality and meets the national and institutional quality criteria.
		1.21.2	The institution has specified criteria for selecting partners and contractors. It also has established procedures to monitor and evaluate their services.

Criterion 2 - MANAGEMENT, ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Scope - The institution takes responsibility for inculcating a desirable value system in all its constituents. The institution has clear and effective communication channels and has efficient resource management and administration systems that enable it to achieve its objectives. The institution is financially sound and can make reliable educational provision. In addition to using technology as a learning resource, the institution manages its activities in a technology-enabled way for effective institutional functioning.

Criteria Standards		Performance Indicators	
2.1	The organisational structure of the institution is appropriate for its operations.	2.1.1	The institution has an organisation chart with specified units and positions appropriate to its functions.
		2.1.2	The institution employs sufficient, appropriately qualified administrative, academic and technical staff to handle various specialized tasks and activities.
		2.1.3	The governance structure provides for collegial decision making and oversight of institutional activities and ensures the overall quality of the institutional provisions.
2.2	The institution has a realistic academic calendar that is followed meticulously.	2.2.1	The institution plans its academic activities and prepares the academic calendar at the beginning of each academic year involving all units, divisions and departments.
		2.2.2	The academic calendar is made available to both students and staff of the institution at the beginning of the academic year.
		2.2.3	The institution assigns responsibility for monitoring the effective implementation of the academic calendar and for proposing mid-term corrections where required.
2.3	The staff at senior management level possess appropriate qualifications and experience for their positions and roles.	2.3.1	The institution has stated criteria for the recruitment, retention and promotion of senior management staff.
		2.3.3	The recruitment process is transparent and the institution ensures adherence to the stated criteria.
		2.3.3	Senior management appointees exemplify the institution's commitment to ensure and maintain quality in all aspects and levels of recruitment.

2.4	The academic, research and extension staff possess appropriate qualifications, skills and expertise for their positions.	2.4.1	The institution has stated criteria for the recruitment, retention and promotion of academic, research and extension staff.
		2.4.2	The recruitment process is transparent and the institution ensures adherence to the stated criteria.
		2.4.3	The selection and promotion criteria give preference to candidates with experience and expertise in various ODL activities such as course material preparation, distance tutoring, supervision, management of learning through distance.
2.5	The administrative staff possess appropriate qualifications and experience for their positions and roles.	2.5.1	The institution has stated criteria for the recruitment, retention and promotion of administrative staff.
		2.5.2	The recruitment process is transparent and the institution ensures adherence to the stated criteria.
		2.5.3	The selection and promotion criteria give preference to candidates with experience and skills in various ODL activities.
2.6	There are clear lines of responsibility and accountability within the institution and the roles of staff are defined and communicated.	2.6.1	The roles and responsibilities of the staff within the institution are clearly defined and every staff member is aware of his/her role and responsibilities through job descriptions and clear organisation charts.
		2.6.2	There are clearly defined work norms.
		2.6.3	There is a justified workload distribution based on the time required by the concerned staff to complete the various assigned tasks (contact hours, tutoring, supervision of tutors, assessment etc).
		2.6.4.	There is an effective and transparent staff performance management and appraisal system which promotes the accountability and effectiveness of the staff in performing their activities.
2.7	There are effective channels for communication with potential, current and past students, with key external agencies, and with all staff, tutors and stakeholders involved in the learning-teaching process.	2.7.1	The institution has a formal mechanism for obtaining feedback from students, staff and other stakeholders on the teaching-learning process.
		2.7.2	There are various channels of communication established to ensure a timely information flow and dialogue across various units and staff of the institution.
		2.7.3	The institution has mechanisms in place for interaction among the staff.
		2.7.4	Clear channels of communication are established between current learners and the tutors and academic staff involved in the learning process.
		2.7.5	Relevant updated information on feedback received is made available to the stakeholders through print and electronic media.

2.8 Enquiries and complaints are dealt with quickly, fairly and efficiently through a transparent process.	2.8.1 There is a mechanism to receive enquiries from stakeholders and provide correct and timely information.
	2.8.2 There is a mechanism to deal promptly with complaints received and provide timely redressal.
	2.8.3 The composition, terms of reference and decisions of the grievance redressal entity are made known to all thereby ensuring the transparency of the process.
2.9 The enrolment procedures are clear and efficient and include provision of accurate, comprehensive and helpful information to prospective learners.	2.9.1 The information package of the institution is comprehensive, providing details of the facilities and support services available to the learners.
	2.9.4 Information to prospective learners includes details of admission requirements, the procedure for enrollment and the requirements for progression through the programme.
	2.9.5 Enrollment to the programmes is strictly in line with the specified norms and admission guidelines.
2.10 The production and delivery of course materials are timely, relevant and quality assured.	2.10.1 The production of the course materials adheres to the agreed time lines.
	2.10.2 The development of the course materials ensures compliance with the institutional quality standards.
	2.10.3 The institution has assigned to an appropriate body responsibility for assuring the quality of the course materials at various levels and stages of production and delivery.
2.11 There is a prompt response to the learners' needs for academic, administrative and personal support.	2.11.1 The institution provides support to learners through appropriately qualified staff.
	2.11.2 The institution ensures the availability of appropriate academic, administrative and other instructional support for effective delivery of the programme.
	2.11.3 Learners can access personal counseling services.
	2.11.4 The Counseling service provides just in time response for the distance learner.
2.12 The assessment and evaluation system is reliable and ensures integrity.	2.12.1 The assessment process forms an integral part of teaching and learning and the analysis of assessment outcomes is used to inform curriculum improvements.
	2.12.2 Information on the assessment of learning outcomes, assessment procedures and schedules is provided in all course modules / topics.
	2.12.3 A range of formative and summative evaluation methods is included to ensure that student learning is appropriately assessed.

	2.12.4	The assessment systems are distance-learner friendly and have effective inbuilt procedures for assessing the achievement of intended learning outcomes.
	2.12.5	The assessment strategies are designed and administered in such a manner that they encourage the distance learners to complete the courses.
	2.12.6	There is a mechanism to ensure that complaints from the learners about the fairness of the assessment and formal appeals against assessment results are dealt with fairly and in a timely manner.
2.13		The institution has an effective system for the procurement, management and maintenance of equipment and facilities.
	2.13.1	The institution has appropriate financial and administrative provision to ensure proper maintenance and operation of equipment and facilities.
	2.13.2	There is adequate financial allocation for procurement, replacement, maintenance and upgrading of the technology and other equipment required for effective programme delivery.
	2.13.3	There are established procedures to take care of regular maintenance works and to handle emergencies.
2.14		Appropriate training is provided to staff on the use and maintenance of new technology, equipment, facilities, and communication and information systems available/deployed in the institution.
	2.14.1	The Strategic Plan of the institution includes specified provision for staff development activities.
	2.14.2	The institution conducts staff development programmes to improve the skills and competencies of the staff in handling the technology, equipment and facilities of the institution.
	2.14.3	The budget allocation for the staff development programme is sufficient to provide in-house and off-site training opportunities for staff.
2.15		The financial procedures are clearly stated and adhered to by the institution.
	2.15.1	The institution's financial procedures comply with the requirements of national financial regulatory bodies.
	2.15.2	There is a formally established body with designated responsibility for oversight of the institution's adherence to statutory requirements and for judicious use of available financial resources.
	2.15.3	The budget allocation process is transparent and ensures that all planned and approved activities can take place.
	2.15.4	The institution earmarks a specific budget allocation for the enhancement of the technology infrastructure required for quality teaching and learning and monitors its utilization.

	2.15.5 The institution has an internal and external financial audit mechanism. Audits take place at regular intervals.
2.16 There is provision for financial assistance for needy learners.	2.16.1 The institution has clearly stated guidelines for providing scholarships, bursaries, stipends and other financial assistance to learners.
	2.16.2 The institution secures funds to support needy learners.
	2.16.3 The institution ensures the effective and timely disbursement of the available financial aid / scholarships / bursaries etc. to the learners.
2.17 Provision is made in the budget to promote and enable constructive experimentation in the design of courses and delivery methods.	2.17.1 There is a budgetary provision for research and innovation in the design and delivery of academic programmes and courses by distance learning.
	2.17.2 The research and development committee or any other appropriate body monitors research activities. Its terms of reference include resource mobilization and utilization and facilitation of networking and information flow among the various departments and units of the institution.
2.18 Staff and stakeholders are represented on governance structures.	2.18.1 Appropriate staff representation is mandated and secured on key governance committees.
2.19 Appropriate learner representation is included in decision-making processes.	2.19.1 Participation and representation of learners in academic committees or any other appropriate body is mandated and secured.
	2.19.2 The institution supports the establishment of student councils, subject associations and student committees and organizes workshops and training programmes to empower learners to contribute productively towards academic improvement.
2.20 There is an efficient and secure system for the administration and maintenance of learners' records over time.	2.20.1 There is a MIS in place which ensures that learners' records, personal information, assessment and evaluation results are securely stored and made accessible only to authorized persons.
	2.20.2 Effective quality assurance arrangements are in place to ensure that the integrity of the learner record is not compromised.
	2.20.3 Learner records are regularly updated and made available without delay to authorized users.
2.21 The institution has a mechanism for constantly streamlining and improving its processes.	2.21.1 Quality assurance procedures are based on a continuous process of feedback, evaluation and improvement.

2.22 Mechanisms are in place to ensure effective coordination among different institutional constituents and with relevant external agencies.	2.22.1 Committee membership is designed to secure appropriate representation of relevant constituencies in decision making processes.
	2.22.2 There is a formal mechanism for liaison between committees to ensure proper coordination and dissemination of information among the various constituencies of the institution.
	2.22.3 There are established channels of communication so that issues discussed in committees are communicated to the senior management for appropriate decision.
2.23 The institution encourages innovation and creativity among different constituents.	2.23.1 The institution's policies and resource allocation procedures encourage innovation and creativity.
	2.23.2 The institution recognizes the good work done by the staff through incentives, rewards, special awards and monetary grants.
2.24 The institution has activities to promote social harmony.	2.24.1 Institutional activities reflect national social justice priorities through inclusion in the curriculum of gender issues, social harmony, human rights, values and ethics.
	2.24.2 The curriculum includes good citizenship and promotes the holistic development of the learner.
	2.24.3 The institution engages in community outreach activities.
2.25 The institution has a statement on 'core values' and mechanisms to ensure adherence to it by all its constituents.	2.25.1 The institution's defined codes of conduct and ethical standards are strictly adhered to by all students and staff.
	2.25.2 Violations of the code of conduct and ethical standards are viewed seriously by the institution and action is initiated.
2.26 The institution has mechanisms to promote interpersonal relationships among key players.	2.26.1 The institution promotes harmonious relationships between key players by providing regular opportunities for communication and by facilitating opportunities for social interaction.
2.27 The institution encourages collaborative relationship for its activities	2.27.1 In the case of shared facilities, the institution adheres to the specific terms of reference (ToRs) and/or the MOUs with partners concerned.
	2.27.2 In programmes delivered collaboratively, responsibility for performance remains with the institution that confers the award (e.g. degree/diploma/certificate etc.).

Criterion 3 - THE LEARNERS

Scope - There is a dynamic system of collecting detailed information and for reflecting, integrating and synthesizing it into knowledge about learners and their needs that is used to inform all aspects of policy and planning, programme and course development, support services, and the overall processes of teaching - learning

No	Criteria	Performance Indicators	
3.1	Entry requirements and prerequisites for programmes and courses are clearly specified so that programmes or courses are relevant and accessible to the student community.	3.1.1	The institution clearly states course requirements, prior knowledge and skills required for pursuing the course, resource implications, time schedules, access to media and technology, success and dropout rates of past students to enable prospective learners to make an informed choice.
		3.1.2	The institution strictly adheres to advertised admission requirements.
3.2	There is a dynamic and integrated database about learners providing information on demographics, language, gender, ethnicity, socio- economic and educational backgrounds and needs and special needs. Right of access to the data base is well defined in line with principles of confidentiality, ethics and good governance.	3.2.1	The institution has a comprehensive data base of learner profiles which is updated at regular intervals.
		3.2.2	Appropriate security measures are in place to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of personal data.
		3.2.3	The institution has policies and procedures in place to ensure that only authorized personnel have access to students' personal data.
3.3	A continuous knowledge generation process based on the data and formal & informal information flow and feedback is in place to understand the needs and issues of learners and provide inputs to programme design, learning management strategies and policies.	3.3.1	The institution has a well-defined capacity building process to strengthen the ability of its staff to scientifically collect and analyse the learner data and synthesize them into information and knowledge.
3.4	The institution is sensitive of and responds to disabled learners including those with specific learning challenges	3.4.1	The institution's admission policy for inclusiveness has adequate provision for admitting disabled learners and fosters inclusiveness.
		3.4.2	The different facilities at the institution and the programmes offered have provision to cater to students with special learning difficulties.

3.5 Academic staff have access to relevant information about learners to facilitate quality teaching- learning.	3.5.1 The institution maintains a database of students enrolled in the institution and the profiles are regularly updated.
	3.5.2 The Management Information System (MIS) of the institution enables the academic staff to access relevant student information and use it for guidance and counseling as well as for performance improvement.
3.6 The institution has mechanisms to facilitate a process of socialization among learners and various relevant stakeholders.	3.6.1 The institution provides opportunities for learners to interact with various stakeholders at regular intervals.
	3.6.2. The institution integrates soft-skill development programmes for learners to facilitate their interaction with various sectors nationally and internationally.
	3.6.3 Teacher and learner interaction is facilitated through formal contact sessions and tutor feedback on assignments.
	3.6.4 The institution has a clear understanding of the profile of the learners to optimize communication between learners and the institution.
	3.6.5 The institution uses available technology (e.g. internet, yahoo groups, e-mail communications, mobile phones ) to communicate with the learners on a continuous basis.
	3.6.6 The institution facilitates and provides for social interaction through approved student societies.
	3.6.7 Staff are accessible to the learners through a range of services (e.g. e-mails, teleconferencing, SMS, telephone, chat, yahoo or other internet groups, discussion forums). Response time to student enquiries is mandated and minimal.
	3.6.8 The institution keeps track of the use of technology for communication between teachers and learners to ensure that the learners' interests are well served.
3.7 The institution has a well-defined process for using knowledge about learners in policy formulation, programme and course development and the provision of learner support services.	3.7.1 The institution reviews and analyses the data on learner profiles, needs and expectations.
	3.7.2 The outcome of reviews and research data collection and analysis, informs the design and redesign of course materials, assessment exercises and tutoring assignments.

		3.7.3 The institution has well-defined tasks and activities with milestones and deliverables with timelines.
		3.7.4 The institution has appropriate mechanisms to incorporate its knowledge about learners into policies, programmes and remedial activities.
3.8	The learners have access to data, information and knowledge about the institution and participate in defining policies, programmes and support services.	3.8.1 Institutional data is made available to learners.
		3.8.2 The institution has a policy on data access and use which includes specific reference to the ethical and intellectual property conditions that must be met.
		3.8.3 The institution's policy and practices encourage the learner community to participate in the formulation of policy in relation to learner support.
3.9	The institution has formal and informal mechanisms and procedures in place to obtain feedback from learners.	3.9.1 The institution obtains formal and informal feedback from learners at regular intervals on the efficiency and effectiveness of its processes.
		3.9.2 The results of the feedback obtained from learners feed into the decision making and planning of its programmes.



Criterion 4 - HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Scope - The human resource provision is appropriate for the education and training services provided. The institution offers development programmes that equip the personnel to perform their tasks effectively.

Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators
4.1 Sufficient qualified and skilled academic, research and extension staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for the learners.	4.1.2 Human resource planning forms an integral part of programme and course development.
	4.1.2 The institution ensures the recruitment of sufficient suitably qualified academic, research and extension staff
	4.1.3 The institution maintains the student/teacher ratios at the planned level and conforms to the standards of the regulatory agencies.
	4.1.4 The institutional human resource plan lays emphasis on providing adequate numbers of teaching staff and staff at the tutoring level to meet the needs of the students.
	4.1.5 The institution provides teaching development programmes at regular intervals to improve the skills and knowledge of teaching and tutoring staff.
4.2 Sufficient qualified and experienced administrative staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for the learners.	4.2.1 Planned administrative staff strength is sufficient to coordinate and supervise the various activities of the institution.
	4.2.2 The institution ensures that the administrative staff employed have the relevant skills and experience to deal with the learners and academic and other staff, of the institution and its outreach centres.
4.3 Sufficient qualified technical and support staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for student learning.	4.3.1 The institution employs sufficient qualified and experienced support and technical staff to support the delivery of programmes and courses to learners.
	4.3.2 The institution ensures that the support and technical staff employed have the required qualifications, skills and experience to handle specialized tasks.
	4.3.3 The institution provides training at regular intervals to improve the skills and knowledge of technical and support staff.

4.4	The responsibilities and job descriptions of staff are clearly specified and respond to the learning needs of the students enrolled in the programme.	4.4.1	Duties, responsibilities and workload of all categories of staff are clearly specified in job descriptions.
		4.4.2	The workload of staff conforms to the work norms agreed upon by the institution.
		4.4.3	Functional responsibilities of individual staff with regard to course development, course delivery, counseling, assessment, tutorial support, monitoring and management and administration of the system are clearly specified and communicated to all staff.
4.5	Quality of performance is recognized for selection and promotion of all categories of staff.	4.5.1	The institution evaluates the performance of the staff at regular intervals through annual self appraisal reports, confidential reports and learner feedback on courses and teaching.
		4.5.2	The outcomes of performance evaluation are communicated to and discussed with the staff concerned with the aim of improving their performance.
		4.5.3	The institution provides training and staff development programmes to improve the performance of the staff and contribute to their continuous development.
		4.5.4	The institution has a scheme for rewarding good performance by providing incentives, promotions, rewards, special benefits, research grants, and sponsorship.
4.7	There is an effective human resource development system to train, retain and motivate the employees for the roles and tasks they perform, particularly with respect to the application of appropriate new technologies.	4.6.1	Institution has a training plan to ensure that training is provided to all categories of staff in all aspects of the application of new technologies.
		4.6.2	There is provision for training and retraining staff at frequent intervals in the use of equipment, facilities and new technologies.
4.7	There is an effective employee welfare system.	4.7.1	Conditions of service include welfare provision that responds to employees' needs and is in line with market norms.
		4.7.2	There is a designated welfare officer or unit to coordinate and monitor implementation of the various welfare schemes for staff.
		4.7.3	There is a well-documented mechanism for staff grievance redressal.

Criterion 5 - PROGRAMME DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Scope - Programmes are designed and developed to meet the needs of learners and of the relevant primary sector including industries and employers. By encouraging access to quality education and participation in the process of development, they make a broader contribution to socio-economic progress. Assessment methods effectively test and measure students' achievement of the stated learning outcomes of the programme and their ability to apply the skills and knowledge learned in other relevant contexts.

No	Criteria	Performance Indicators
5.1	The programmes of the institution reflect the institutional mission, goals and objectives	5.1.1 The offer of programmes is determined in response to national needs and reflects global trends.
		5.1.2 Programmes offered are responsive to changing market needs and designed to achieve the institution's mission.
5.2	The programme objectives are clearly defined and focus on the development of the learners' knowledge, attitudes and skills and their application in professional practice including research and extension where applicable.	5.2.1 The programmes' stated objectives focus on the needs of the nation, prospective learners, employers and the community.
		5.2.2 The objectives of each programme exhibit a clear relationship between the learners' needs (such as prior learning ,entry level skills, knowledge and experience and credit transfers ) and the media and technology and other facilities and services available to support delivery
		5.2.3 When a programme is aimed at a particular type of occupation or vocation, the objectives of the programme clearly state the type of occupation or vocation and the knowledge, attitudes and skills to be developed during the programme. activities.
		5.2.4. Learning outcomes focus on skills development and their application in the field and to research and extension

5.3	The institutional framework for programme development has well-defined and documented processes and procedures with designated responsibilities and approval authorities that are clearly communicated to all stakeholders and implementing agents.	5.3.1 The procedures for programme development and approval are clearly specified and meet the requirements of the accrediting authorities.
		5.3.2 The programme development and approval process involves scrutiny by internal and external peers.
		5.3.3. The processes and procedures for programme development are disseminated to all stakeholders and implementing agencies.
5.4	Programmes are designed and developed taking into consideration the learners' needs, the range of learning environments in which they will operate and the resources available to them.	5.4.1 The programmes are developed keeping in view the factors that may influence learner success, such as their learning environment, needs, resources, learning styles, preferences and skills and knowledge base at the entry level.
		5.4.2 The programme structure is based on a careful analysis of the availability of the appropriate technologies, the learning environment of students and external accreditation requirements.
		5.4.3. Taking into account the constraints imposed by the learning environment experienced by the learners, the programmes are designed to inculcate an appreciation and understanding of the fieldwork requirement.
5.5	Programmes are developed and modified in consultation with associate stakeholders to ensure sensitivity to emerging patterns in local and global trends and demands and current socio-economic changes.	5.5.1 The programmes are developed based on a needs analysis exercise including market research, liaison with industry, review of national priorities and professional needs and reflect the latest developments and practices in the field of study.
		5.5.2 The institution has mandated mechanisms for review and modification of its programmes in consultation with relevant stakeholders such as employers, industry, education sector, professional bodies, the community, staff and learners.
		5.5.3 The programme is sensitive to the production culture, global and local trends and recent socio-economic changes.
5.6	The academic standard of the programmes is appropriate to the level of the award and is oriented towards the practical application of developed knowledge and acquired skills.	5.6.1 The curriculum (expected outcomes, content, teaching and learning strategies and assessment methods of the programme) matches the standards and benchmarks established by national bodies (e.g. accreditation agencies, academic, professional and vocational bodies).
		5.6.2 The expected outcomes, the content, teaching and learning strategies and assessment methods of the programme are aligned and appropriate to the award and objectives of the programme.
		5.6.3. The programme outcomes reflect the skills and attitudes required for field applicability and real life situations.

5.7	Access to programmes is as open as possible with flexible entry and exit points that recognize the prior learning and experiences of individual learners.	5.7.1 The access and entry requirements for the programme are open to the extent possible with appropriate recognition for prior knowledge and experience.
		5.7.2 Programmes offered by open entry system institutions provide additional academic support to under – prepared learners (e.g. through bridging courses, additional course inputs and increased contact sessions including special sessions for optimizing the use of ICTs).
		5.7.3 The programme structure is flexible and allows for and encourages lateral entry and exit that enables progression to higher levels and programme diversification.
		5.7.4. The admission policy reflects the institution’s commitment to inclusiveness and affordability.
5.8	The programmes provide information for learners which includes a description of the aims, objectives and learning outcomes, target groups, teaching-learning processes, means of delivery, support services, scheme of assessment, credit and time requirements and clearly specifies the challenges and risks for completion of the programme in relation to real life situations.	5.8.1 The institution provides clear information about its programmes (via its web-site, the media, prospectus and information days) to all prospective learners.
		5.8.2 The institution provides an updated and comprehensive overview of the programme (e.g. aims and objectives , learning outcomes, teaching, learning and delivery processes, support services, schedule of assessment, term requirements, credit transfers and award requirements) to all registered students at the beginning of the academic sessions.
		5.8.3 The Prospectus and Student Handbook are easily accessible to all intended users both off-line and on-line.
		5.8.4. The institution’s advocacy and awareness materials provide information about the challenges, risks and field orientation involved in the programme
5.9	The Programme curriculum is based on recent research and innovation, reflects current knowledge and practice and is sufficiently comprehensive for learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes.	5.9.1 The content of the programme is up-to-date and reflects current knowledge and practice.
		5.9.2 The teaching and learning and assessment strategies of the programme are structured to facilitate the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
		5.9.3. The curriculum is comprehensive with a balanced input of theory and field components and inclusive of extension and outreach activities.
		5.9.4. The programme curriculum reflects traditional knowledge and recent developments in research and innovation.
5.10	Programme design and development pays attention to gender equity, multiculturalism, social justice and cohesion, ethical values and environmental sustainability.	5.10.1 Issues of national and global priority such as gender, equity, inclusion, diversity, environment, social justice values and ethics are integrated into the curriculum.
		5.10.2 Where appropriate, credit bearing activities based on issues such as gender, equity, ethics and values, human rights and social justice are incorporated in the programme.

5.11 The programmes provide sufficient flexibility for learner choices of courses and also of research, extension and outreach activities.	5.11.1 Sufficient elective courses from outside the major discipline are available for learners to choose a pathway through the programme that meets their needs.
	5.11.2 The interdisciplinary approach to programme design also makes possible the lateral movement of the learners to other programmes at various levels.
	5.11.3. The programme is flexible enough to provide choices in specific professional orientation for research, education and outreach.
	5.11.4. The programme provides scope for innovations and innovative interventions including use of indigenous knowledge.
5.12 The programmes are evaluated on the basis of the learners' achievement of the intended learning outcomes and in terms of applicability of the acquired skills and knowledge in real life situations.	5.12.1 Programme evaluation and monitoring is undertaken at regular intervals.
	5.12.2 There is a regular and structured feedback mechanism in place to obtain feedback from learners, teachers, employers and the community about the effectiveness of the programme in achieving its objectives.
	5.12.3 The feedback from the learners and employers, as well as application and registration data, student assessment results and graduate employment outcomes form the basis of the evaluation of programme performance against its stated objectives.
	5.12.4 The outcomes of the evaluation are used to make necessary changes and improvements to programme design and delivery.
	5.12.5. The learners are evaluated in terms of their ability to apply the acquired skills and knowledge in real life situations.
	5.12.6. The evaluation includes the learner's involvement and participation in extension and community development activities.
5.13 Learner and associated stakeholder satisfaction with the quality of education and training provided is regularly evaluated and synthesized for continuous improvement.	5.13.1 The institution has a mechanism to survey learner satisfaction rates with reference to the service providers, the programme delivery and the commitment of the institution to meeting the learners' needs.
	5.13.2 The survey of learner satisfaction levels is conducted at regular intervals in a transparent manner.
	5.13.3 The outcomes of the learner satisfaction surveys are considered positively, recorded appropriately and used promptly to improve the programme.
	5.13.4 The institution promptly informs staff and learners of the outcomes of the survey and the actions taken in response to feedback received.
	5.13.5 An appropriate feed-back synthesis system and strategy is developed to review the satisfaction levels from a holistic perspective that includes learner as well as multiple stakeholders.

## Criterion 6 - COURSE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

**Scope** - A course is a component of a programme. The course content is an outcome of research, need assessments and inputs from stakeholders. The course material clearly details the objectives and learning outcomes, content, approaches to teaching-learning and assessment and learner support. There is an identified process of development and review of courses.

No	Criteria	Performance Indicators
6.1	The courses are designed according to the stated programme objectives.	6.1.1 Course design is focused on national and international priorities and trends and the needs of prospective learners and employers.
		6.1.2 Courses reflect current developments and knowledge in the relevant field of study.
		6.1.3 Individual courses are designed to contribute to achieving the overall programme objectives.
6.2	Course design takes into consideration various delivery mechanisms and incorporates appropriate and contextualized ICT tools.	6.2.1 The choice of media and the technology to be used is appropriately integrated in the course design.
		6.2.2 The choice of media and technology takes into account the range of media and infrastructural support that the institution can make available to its learners.
		6.2.3 Course design reflects institutional policy on ICT for learning.
		6.2.4 There is a visible link between learners' needs and the features of the technology selected for course delivery which is aimed at motivating the learners in the use of that technology.
		6.2.5 The course design permits the use of different ICTs that are suitable for the context of delivery.
6.3	Courses are designed based on learner-centred principles that focus on the need for relevant knowledge and skills.	6.3.1 Teaching/learning strategies to be employed, teaching methods, learner activities, use of appropriate ICTs and contact sessions are determined as part of the course design process.
		6.3.2 The teaching/learning methods are consciously planned and monitored keeping in view different learner abilities and needs.
		6.3.3 The teaching/learning strategies are clearly stated in the course book and communicated and discussed with the learners.
		6.3.4. The course design process gives appropriate consideration to relevant knowledge & skills and their applicability in the field.

6.4	Courses have ample scope for encouraging and developing creative and critical thinking, independent and lifelong learning and interpersonal communication and team work skills and extend beyond the theoretical framework to provide opportunities to develop the skills required for research, innovation and outreach.	6.4.1 Learning activities are designed to contribute to the development of the specified generic skills.
		6.4.2. Courses have ample scope for developing critical knowledge and skills relevant to research, innovation and outreach.
		6.4.3. Community development, preservation and conservation of natural resources are essential components of the curriculum.
6.5	Standard formats for instructional design and development are in place and are followed.	6.5.1 Templates are designed and developed for effective instructional design and efficient course development.
		6.5.2 The institution provides prior training and necessary inputs to the staff involved in instructional design and development.
		6.5.3 The institution adheres to the agreed formalities and templates to be used for instructional design and development.
6.6	Instructional design takes diversity of learning contexts, learning styles and prior learning and experiences into account to enhance the opportunities for collaborative learning and ensure realistic scheduling of activities.	6.6.1 The instructional design template requires the use of inclusive language and provides a variety of activities that accommodate different learning styles, circumstances and preferences.
		6.6.2 Scheduling of activities addresses the needs of distance learners and their access to technology and other facilities.
		6.6.3. The instructional design recognizes the learner's prior learning and experience in order to enhance the scope of cooperative learning.
		6.6.4. The learners' unique prior learning and experience are given due consideration in scheduling learning activities .
6.7	The course development process incorporates a range of relevant expertise.	6.7.1 Courses are developed with contributions from experts in the academic subject area, in instructional design and in course delivery.
		6.7.2 Course development is based on a plan that details the processes, timelines, finance, infrastructural requirements, resources and roles and responsibilities of people involved.
		6.7.3. The course development process includes inputs from all associated stakeholders.
6.8	Instructional design includes assessment of learning against stated learning outcomes.	6.8.1 Learning outcomes are clearly stated. Assessment is designed to measure achievement of learning. outcomes in terms of defined criteria.

6.9	Course design uses appropriate technology to engage and support learners and to provide communication facilities.	6.9.1	Appropriate technology is used to engage and support learners.
		6.9.2	Communication with learners uses the technologies that are most accessible to the learners such as the internet, mobile phone, telephone, television and radio.
		6.9.3	The institution analyses the ease of use and level of technology available to the learners.
6.10	A complete instructional package includes course description, syllabus, course plans, learning outcomes, details of assessments and evaluations, completion requirements, course material including multimedia supplementary learning resources, interactive course activities, community building activities and assessments, texts and media, materials and information to demonstrate the appropriate scope, sequence and depth of each course in relation to the stated goals and objectives.	6.10.1	The instructional package is comprehensive and contains a learner friendly description of the syllabus, course plans, learning outcomes assessment and evaluation details, credit hours, teaching/learning strategies, learning packages (study materials study guides, audio/video material, CD ROMs and online texts) and also the annual calendar of activities.
		6.10.2	The instructional package is made available (both off-line and on-line) to all registered learners and staff ahead of the courses offering.
		6.10.3	The instructional package is reviewed, evaluated and updated regularly through a systematic process.
6.11	A variety of learning activities including action research and practical orientation is provided in the course to encourage active learning, collaborative learning and self-assessment.	6.11.1	Appropriate learning strategies such as experiential learning, collaborative learning and personal learning are designed into the course.
		6.11.2	The institution systematically records and assesses the effectiveness and impact of learning strategies.
		6.11.3	The course includes field oriented learning activities.
6.12	Appropriate personnel and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of course materials and their production processes.	6.12.1	Roles and responsibilities for quality assurance in course materials design, development and production are clearly specified.
		6.12.2	The institution has a mechanism to ensure the relevant competence of the content developers, technical and support staff and others involved in course design, development and production.

	6.12.3 Technical and production standards in course design, development and production are clearly specified.
	6.12.4 The course materials developed are pilot-tested and quality assured with reference to the aims and objectives of the programme and learners' needs prior to field release.
	6.12.5 The institution obtains regular feedback from tutors on the course materials, with reference to their user friendliness, appropriateness and effectiveness.
	6.12.6 The feedback is used to improve the course materials and assure their quality.
	6.12.7. Courses adopt a contextual framework to facilitate the situated learning that is essential for field orientation.
6.13 Mechanisms for adoption and adaptation are established to encourage linkages with national and international agencies for course design, development and delivery.	6.13.1 There are MOUs with national and international agencies to share good quality materials which demonstrate good practice in course design, review of materials, development and delivery.
	6.13.2 The institution has linkages with national and international agencies to exchange expertise for content development and delivery methods.
	6.13.3 The institution has established mechanisms and flexibility for sharing technology and other facilities for efficient delivery of the course.
	6.13.4 The institution has a policy relating to the use of Open Educational Resources

Criterion 7 - LEARNER SUPPORT AND PROGRESSION

Scope - Learners are supported by the provision of a range of opportunities for tutoring through the use of various forms of technology. Contact and assignment tutoring, mentoring, counseling, real life exposure and / or simulation and peer support structures are employed to facilitate their holistic progression.

Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators
7.1 Learner support is planned during programme development and is built into the design of the programme and course materials.	7.1.1 Sufficient contact sessions are planned and integrated into the course design.
	7.1.2 Mandatory attendance is fixed at a minimum desired level.
	7.1.3 The support of individual learners is built into the design of course materials.
	7.1.4 Peer support mechanisms are built into the course materials.
	7.1.5 The institution provides on-going support for learner progression across courses within a programme of study.
7.1 Learner support is provided using a range of media, with emphasis on the use of appropriate ICTs	7.2.1 The institution uses a range of media to provide support and guidance to learners.
	7.2.2 Adequate administrative and technical support is given to tutors to enable them to provide individual academic support for learners.
	7.2.3 The institution provides adequate ICT facilities.
7.3. Tutors are selected and trained to shift their roles from being teachers to facilitators of learning.	7.3.1 There is a specified set of criteria (qualifications, experience) and procedures for the recruitment of tutors who are qualified to act as facilitators.
	7.3.2 The institution adheres to the recruitment criteria.
	7.3.3 Induction and orientation training programmes are conducted for tutors before the commencement of the course.
	7.3.4 There is a mechanism for monitoring the performance of tutors which informs future training programmes.
	7.3.5 The good performance of tutors is identified and rewarded.

7.4 Tutorial group size is optimum to facilitate adequate support to be provided to learners in various ways	7.4.1	The tutor/learner ratio enables tutors to provide individual support to learners and monitor their progress to completion.
	7.4.2	The tutor/learner ratio enables tutors to work with small groups of learners and facilitate problem solving.
7.5 Learners have access to the tutors through a variety of media and locations.	7.5.1	The learners have access to the tutors at fixed centres and can also reach them through various modes such as. by telephone, appointment, e-mail, on-line discussion and video conferencing.
	7.5.2	There is provision for contact sessions specifically for learners entering courses through open access.
7.6 Tutors provide timely feedback to learners on their assignments	7.6.1	There is a specified procedure to receive, record, process and return marked assignments to learners.
	7.6.2	The specific time frame to return assignments allows learners to benefit from formative feedback.
	7.6.3	There is adequate time for moderation of marked assignments within the overall time frame.
	7.6.4	Procedures for receiving, recording, processing and returning assignments are regularly monitored.
7.7 Academic, administrative and technical staff facilitate learner success.	7.7.1	The institution employs sufficient and qualified academic staff as tutors and provides professional training and development opportunities to them.
	7.7.2	The institution employs sufficient and competent administrative staff to support learners.
	7.7.3	The institution employs sufficient and competent technical staff to respond to learner needs.
	7.7.4	The institution has robust and extensive systems that underpin learner support.
	7.7.5	The institution emphasizes service orientation in the training of its staff.
7.8 There are mechanisms to follow up and support learners throughout the duration of their study.	7.8.1	Academic and personal counseling is provided to the learners.
	7.8.2	Roles and responsibilities for academic and personal counseling are clearly specified.

	7.8.3	The institution provides specific guidelines, monitoring systems, personnel and institutional spaces to facilitate programmes requiring practical experience.
7.9 Appropriate support and facilities are provided for learners with specific learning difficulties.	7.9.1	The institution identifies and responds to learners with specific learning difficulties.
	7.9.2	The institution provides materials and services in multiple formats to meet learners' needs.
	7.9.3	The tutors, administrative and technical staff are provided with necessary training to address the needs of learners with specific learning difficulties.
	7.9.4	The institution has a mechanism to make special concessions to learners with specific learning difficulties.
7.10 Learner support emphasizes the development of independent learning skills, including reflective and self-directed learning.	7.10.1	The institution provides orientation to the learners on the desired learning skills for pursuing the programme.
	7.10.2	There is appropriate guidance and support structures empowering the learners to acquire the skills for independent learning, including reflective and self-directed learning.
7.11 Opportunities are provided for academic and social peer interaction, vertically with tutor and horizontally with peers.	7.11.1	The institution has support structures that provide opportunities for interaction, vertically with tutor and horizontally with peers, which empower the learners to share knowledge and information and develop interactive and collaborative learning skills.
7.12 Measures for feedback and monitoring of learner support services are in place.	7.12.1	Regular and systematic monitoring of learner support services for continuous improvement takes place.
	7.12.2	Feedback from learners on support services is regularly solicited and acted upon. Learners are advised of changes resulting from their input.
7.13 Staff are trained and have a positive attitude towards learner-centred provisions and effectively and efficiently handle the learner-support services.	7.13.1	Staff are trained to handle the various support services provided to the learners such as equipment, technology, physical and infrastructural facilities and communication and information systems.

	7.13.2	There are appropriate guidance and support structures empowering the staff to use appropriate technology and other support provisions to facilitate effective and efficient learning by the students.
	7.13.3	Training of support staff includes service orientation. Support staff are empowered to make decisions in pursuit of learner-oriented services.
7.14 The institution has mechanisms to facilitate student progression from one level of education to the next higher level successfully and towards gainful employment and/or for improvement of community livelihoods.	7.14.1	Learners are advised of opportunities to progress into higher level studies.
	7.14.2	Career guidance advice is provided for learners.
	7.14.3	The programmes of the institution provide opportunities for the learners to progress both vertically and horizontally.
	7.14.4	Progression and completion rates are monitored in relation to institutional and national targets.
	7.14.5	Performance of past learners is monitored to inform programme revisions.
	7.14.6	There is a positive perception of graduates towards gainful employment and/or for improvement of community livelihoods.
7.15 Learner support systems target retention	7.15.1	Retention rates are monitored against targets
	7.15.2	Preventative support provided in initial courses
	7.15.3	Remedial interventions are provided throughout the programmes for learners at risk of failure
7.16 Mechanisms are in place to enable learners to obtain hands on experience (learning by doing) through attachments with industry, farm and community.	7.16.1	The programme provides opportunities for learners for hands-on experience through attachments with industry.
	7.16.2	The programme provides opportunities for learners for hands-on experience through attachments with farms.
	7.16.3	The programme provides opportunities for learners for hands-on experience through attachments with the community.
7.17 Mechanisms are in place to enable learners to acquire skills necessary to perform functions of knowledge info-mediaries	7.17.1	Learners are provided with necessary training and skills to function as knowledge info-mediaries.

## Criterion 8 - LEARNER ASSESSMENT, AND EVALUATION

**Scope** - Assessment, an essential feature of the teaching and learning process, is properly managed, and reflects institutional, national and international standards. The institution publishes and communicates its academic assessment policy for students and applies it transparently with fairness and consistency. Evaluation is based on the stated programme objectives.

No	Criteria	Performance Indicators
8.1	The teaching - learning processes of the institution include formative as well as summative assessment in clearly defined proportions.	8.1.1 The institution's assessment policy defines the parameters for apportioning of formative and summative assessments in a course.
		8.1.2 The assessment outcomes are used to inform teaching methods and improve the curriculum.
		8.1.3 There is a range of assessment tasks and methods for validating learning outcomes in each course.
		8.1.4 There is transparency, fairness and consistency in the assessment system.
8.2	Assessment is aligned with stated learning outcomes.	8.2.1 Assessment tasks undertaken by the learners test the stated learning outcomes.
		8.2.2 The assessment workload is appropriately linked to the level and credit requirements of the course.
8.3	Learners and academic staff are informed about the different types of assessment and assessment criteria for the course.	8.3.1 The course information package provides the details of the assessment, the assessment techniques, the intended learning outcomes and timelines.
		8.3.2 Induction and orientation programmes for learners at course commencement provide information on assessment expectations.
8.4	There are systems for the tracking and recording of the learners' performance and progress on a regular basis and a timely communication and counseling to the learners.	8.4.1. The institution has mechanisms to provide appropriate forums for counseling the learners
		8.4.2 Procedures for both formative and summative assessment ensure consistency and accuracy of marking / and grading and provide timely feedback to learners.

	8.4.3 All summative assessment grades are accurately recorded on the learner's record and are communicated promptly to the learners.
	8.4.4 Formative assessment enables the learners to receive objective feedback on their performance.
8.5 The processes of assessment meet the requirements of institutional standards and other appropriate national and international accreditation bodies.	8.5.1 There are quality assurance mechanisms in place to ensure a fair and reliable assessment of learners as stated in the institutional policy.
	8.5.2 The marking schemes are aligned and are consistent with those of other national agencies and accreditation bodies.
	8.5.3 The standards and quality of assessment are rigorously monitored and maintained.
	8.5.4 The institution has standardized tutor marking schemes.
	8.5.5 The institution holds regular standardization meetings with tutors and course coordinators.
8.6 The institution ensures the security of assessment processes	8.6.1 Arrangements for locally administered summative assessments are secure.
	8.6.2 Procedures are in place to ensure the security of identity and of personal information during the assessment process.
	8.6.3 Assessment results are recorded securely and reliably and are available to learners.
	8.6.4 Arrangements are in place to ensure that the integrity of the certification process is not compromised
8.7 Detailed marking schemes and assessment rubrics are provided to all examiners.	8.7.1 The institution incorporates detailed marking schemes and assessment rubrics as an integral part of formative assessment.
	8.7.2. The institution has a technology- enabled system such as intra-net for communicating and sharing the marking schemes and assessment rubrics.
	8.7.3 There is a procedure for orientation of the examiners on the marking schemes to ensure consistency.
	8.7.4 There are procedures to ensure that examiners apply the marking scheme in a consistent manner.
	8.7.5 The assessment strategy of the institution has provision for internal and external moderation.

8.8	Appropriate measures are in place to ensure the integrity of assessment.	8.8.1 The learners are made aware of ethical practices and code of conduct for submission of assignments and project work and for sitting examinations.
		8.8.2 There is a clearly stated disciplinary procedure for handling malpractices and violation of code of conduct and ethical standards relating to copying, plagiarism, reproduction of open source materials and Intellectual Property Rights.
		8.8.3 The institution adheres to the disciplinary procedure and initiates timely and justifiable disciplinary action wherever applicable.
		8.8.4 There is provision for grievance redressal and appeals.
8.9	Assessment results are documented and communicated without delay to all learners.	8.9.1 At the beginning of every academic session, the institution decides and communicates to the students the timelines for assessment and the publication of results.
		8.9.2 The institution adheres to the scheduled timelines.
		8.9.3 The institution ensures transparency in assessment by communicating the procedures and processes through various media and through the appeals and grievance redressal mechanism.
		8.9.4 The institution adheres to the timelines for the distribution of grades and transcripts.
8.10	Learner satisfaction with the programme is appropriately measured and corrective measures are implemented.	8.10.1 Learner satisfaction rates are regularly collected and disseminated.
8.11	Graduation rates are aligned with institutional and national benchmarks and targets.	8.11.1 Completion rates of learners are aligned with institutional targets.
		8.11.2 Completion, retention and progression rates are monitored on a continuous basis.
		8.11.3 The institution has a mechanism for reviewing the effectiveness of the processes and the overall performance of the assessment system.
		8.11.4 The institution provides periodic reports on academic performance to stakeholders including employers
		8.11.5 The institution publishes the results of annual surveys of graduate employment.



Criterion 9 - LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE AND RESOURCES

Scope - The institution has adequate and appropriate infrastructure facilities to conduct quality academic programmes through relevant modes of learning. The institution uses technological innovations in educational transactions to enrich the learning experiences it provides to students and manages the institution in a technology-enabled way for effective institutional functioning. Through such technological innovations, the linkages between students and stakeholders are enhanced for meaningful learning.

No	Criteria	Indicator
9.1	The institution has access to physical facilities with adequate capacity and resources to conduct academic programmes and administrative functions efficiently.	9.1.1 The institutions has optimal utilizations plans for every resource
		9.1.2 The institution has a capacity building and redeployment programme for effective utilization of resources.
		9.1.3 The institution has sufficient classrooms with the required ICT support to run the scheduled contact sessions.
		9.1.4 Necessary physical infrastructure (space and buildings) is available for conducting small group interactions and other academic activities.
		9.1.5 The buildings and physical space are sufficient to accommodate the administrative staff, for document processing, storage and other purposes.
		9.1.6 The institution has well equipped laboratories including media and production laboratories for developing course materials.
		9.1.7 The institution provides individual offices for academic staff with access to technology to support teaching-learning and research.

9.2	The institution has plans to ensure that the growth and management of the infrastructure keeps pace with the academic growth of the institution.	9.2.1 The institution has a master plan reflecting the future development of the campus.
		9.2.2 There is a strategic plan for the institution covering the anticipated growth of the infrastructure in order to keep pace with institutional plans for academic expansion.
		9.2.3 The institution conducts an annual review of facilities and usage rates.
		9.2.4 The outcome of the review is used to improve the infrastructural facilities and as input to the strategic plan of the institution.
9.3	There are procedures and mechanisms in place to ensure optimal use, maintenance and development of the infrastructure facilities of the institution.	9.3.1 The institution's strategic plan gives a clear direction on the optimal utilization, maintenance and development of infrastructural facilities.
		9.3.2 The institution has set procedures for maintenance of the infrastructural facilities including annual maintenance contracts.
		9.3.3 There is a specific budgetary allocation based on the information provided by the infrastructure review for the maintenance and development of the infrastructure.
9.4	Library facilities include technology aided learning materials to enable students to acquire information, knowledge and skills.	9.4.1 The library facilities of the institution are developed keeping in mind the requirements of the distance learner.
		9.4.2 The library catalogue is up-to-date and easily accessible to learners.
		9.4.3 The library is computerized and has sufficient materials available in electronic form (e-books, e-journals).
		9.4.4 The library provides internet and reprographic facilities to staff and learners.
		9.4.5 There is an inter – library borrowing facility which is accessible to both students and the staff.
		9.4.6 The library has sufficient qualified staff trained to deal with the latest electronic media and provide adequate support to the learners to access the library facilities.
		9.4.7 There is justified allocation of financial resources for the upkeep, maintenance and development of the library.
9.5	The Library is developed as an information and knowledge resource centre.	9.5.1 The institution ensures through plans and budget allocations that the library is equipped and optimally utilized in terms of technology and human resources for facilitating dialogues, discourses and interactions between various stakeholders.

<p>9.6 The institution uses technology as a learning resource and manages its activities in a technology enabled way.</p>	<p>9.6.1 The institution makes extensive use of technology for learning and ensures that the technical infrastructure for delivery (e.g. computers, internet, electricity, audio/video facilities) is fully operational.</p>
	<p>9.6.2 There is a process in place to monitor and maintain the equipment and technology in good working order and also to facilitate annual maintenance contracts.</p>
	<p>9.6.3 The institution allocates sufficient budget annually to replace, add and deploy new technology and related facilities.</p>
	<p>9.6.4 The institution has a Management Information System (MIS) in place which provides for proper communication among the various units of the institution, with the various stakeholders and with the learners and staff.</p>
	<p>9.6.5 Adequate computing facilities are available in the institution and are accessible to all academic and administrative staff.</p>
<p>9.7 There is wide distribution of services and knowledge sharing through outreach centres to ensure equity and access.</p>	<p>9.7.1 The institution ensures that the outreach centres are equipped with infrastructure facilities &amp; optimally utilized in terms of technology and human resources for facilitating dialogues, discourses and interactions between various stakeholders.</p>
	<p>9.7.2 The outreach centres are widely distributed cross different geographic areas in inaccessible places thus catering to larger numbers and remote rural populations.</p>
	<p>9.7.3 The information on the available services at the outreach centres and those at the central facility is made known to all learners and staff.</p>
	<p>9.7.4 The institution constantly monitors the performance of the outreach centres in terms of quality, access and equity.</p>
	<p>9.7.5 The institution has clearly laid down guidelines to select, review, monitor and provide guidance to the managers and staff of the outreach centres.</p>
	<p>9.7.6 There is a strong and cordial linkage between the institution and the outreach centres facilitating timely communication and good relationships.</p>

9.8	The institution has monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place to evaluate the adequacy and accessibility of resources and services for learners and takes appropriate remedial measures to address inadequacies.	9.8.1 The institution obtains feedback from learners and staff on the adequacy and accessibility of the support facilities and learning resources available at the institution and the outreach centres.
		9.8.2 The outcome of the feedback is acted upon and appropriate remedial measures are taken to overcome any inadequacies.
		9.8.3 There is a provision in the budget for meeting unforeseen emergencies in the provision of learning support facilities
9.9	The institution has policies and strategies for partnerships and collaboration.	9.9.1 The institution has procedures for entering into Memorandum of Understanding with different types of partners.
		9.9.2 The institution has in place a capacity building programme in public-private partnership for its staff.
		9.9.3 The institution is an active member of relevant consortia, professional bodies and forums.
		9.9.4 The institution has clear procedures for its learners to access the facilities of other institutions available on a sharing basis.
		9.9.5 Contracts with other institutions allowing learner access to specified facilities are clearly written and legally enforceable.
		9.9.6 The institution ensures regular monitoring of the accessibility of the facilities and services offered to the learners by other institutions.
9.10	Technology is used for participative interactive learning between learners, academic staff and stakeholders.	9.10.1 The institution has appropriate ICT facilities (with appropriate utilization plans) for linking students, staff and stakeholders.
		9.10.2 The institution has a framework defining the access and utilization of the facilities by the learners, staff and stakeholders.
		9.10.3 The institution has processes for mobilizing and building the capacity of the different stakeholders to promote interaction and facilitate knowledge flow including indigenous knowledge.

## Criterion 10 - RESEARCH, CONSULTANCY AND EXTENSION SERVICES

**Scope** - Research influences development of educational programmes and services. The institution supports community outreach by providing consultancy and extension services.

Criteria Standards	Performance Indicators
10.1 The institution actively encourages and promotes research by academic staff and learners.	10.1.1 There is a research committee or an appropriate body which develops procedures and guidelines for undertaking research by academic staff.
	10.1.2 The institution provides seed money for academic staff to conduct research.
	10.1.3 The institution has strong links to and collaborates with various international, national, governmental and non-governmental agencies in undertaking research.
	10.1.4 The institution facilitates and encourages research by providing administrative and academic support to its academic staff in the form of study leave, project preparation, sponsorship, physical facilities, preferential work load allocations etc.)
10.2 Findings of research underpin the development of the programmes and the courses of the institution.	10.2.1 The institution undertakes market research and solicits the views of employers, industry and local communities to prioritize programme and course development.
	10.2.2 The research output is used to make informed choices for developing programmes and courses.
	10.2.3 Research into technologies is encouraged to prepare the institution to make informed choices about their introduction.
10.3 There are appropriate procedures and measures to ensure ethical practices in research.	10.3.1 The institution has a stated code of conduct and ethical practices in research.
	10.3.2 There is a stated procedure adopted by the research committee or an appropriate body to ensure specified ethical practices in research relating to plagiarism, copying, intellectual property rights etc.
	10.3.3 Policies, strategies and procedures are in place to encourage, recognize and reward integrated approach for effectively linking education, research, extension and consultancy services
10.4 There are relevant mechanisms and procedures to monitor and evaluate research within the institution.	10.4.1 At appropriate stages, the research committee or an appropriate body monitors and evaluates the research work of the academic staff that is funded by the institution.

	10.4.2	Research activities are an integral part of the duties of academic staff. Publications and research projects are given due recognition and good work is rewarded.
	10.4.3	Academic staff are encouraged to disseminate the research findings that are relevant to other units of the institution.
	10.4.4	Scholarly publications of the institution are subject to peer review.
	10.4.5	The institution encourages systemic research and the results feed into the improvement of the system.
10.5		There are appropriate mechanisms and procedures to facilitate and encourage consultancy services to the wider community
	10.5.1	The potential expertise of the academic staff is identified and published through all media.
	10.5.2	The institution has a policy for sharing the remuneration earned through consultancy between the academic staff member and the institution.
10.6		The institution is responsive to community needs and conducts relevant research, extension and awareness programmes to solve the real life problems.
	10.6.1	The institution has an extension unit which undertakes various community engagement activities such as HIV/AIDS awareness, gender issues, environment issues, livelihood improvement etc.
	10.6.2	Community work undertaken by learners is recognized by the institution as part fulfillment of graduation requirements.
	10.6.3	The institution has a policy in place to identify and support institutional engagement in community demand driven research.
10.7		Research, consultancy and extension services are actively promoted to build linkages with outreach for end users on farm and in industry.
	10.7.1	The institution has strong industry – institution – community linkages built into its activities through membership of Advisory Boards, Council and Board of Governors.
	10.7.2	The industry – institution – community network fosters close relationships between the world of work and the world of learning for the learners.
	10.7.3	Policies, strategies, and procedures are in place to encourage, recognize and reward research, extension and consultancy services.
10.8		Mechanisms are in place to identify, facilitate and support areas of research that require multi-disciplinary approach and/or public-private-community partnerships.
	10.8.1	The institution has a policy in place in support of and mechanisms to ensure implementation of multi-disciplinary research.
	10.8.2	The institution has a policy in place in support of and mechanisms to ensure implementation of public-private partnerships based research.
	10.8.3	Polices, strategies, and procedures are in place to encourage, recognize and reward integrated approach for effectively linking education, research, extension and consultancy services.

## Section III

# CASE STUDIES



## Case Study – 1

### ASSURING INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH GOOD GOVERNANCE AT THE UK OPEN UNIVERSITY

*Denise Kirkpatrick*

#### ***Editor's Note***

*This case study of the UK Open University describes how its organisational structure, effective communication channels and efficient resource management and administrative systems enable the institution to assure the overall quality of the learning experience for its students. It mainly reflects the performance standards and indicators relating to Criterion 1 – Vision, Mission and Planning; and Criterion 2 – Management, Organisational Culture and Leadership. However it also makes reference to Criterion 5 – Programme Design and Development; and Criterion 8 – Learner Assessment and Evaluation in Standards and Performance Indicators of Distance Higher Education Institutions in Section 2. Criteria Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicators (PIs) are given in parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***Institutional Context***

The Open University is the United Kingdom's only university dedicated to open and distance learning. Established in 1969 its mission is “to be ... open to people, places, methods and ideas. It promotes educational opportunity and social justice by providing high quality university education to all who wish to realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential”.

The OU has over 200 000 students studying across the four nations of the United Kingdom, throughout mainland Europe, and across the world through partner relationships. The OU offers a range of programmes from undergraduate through to Doctoral level via supported open learning. In the UK learner support is offered through thirteen regional and national centres.

The Open University has three categories of academic staff. This reflects its UK-wide role and the distinctive way in which it operates to design, develop and deliver supported open learning:

- a) Academic staff based at Walton Hall (headquarters of the OU) engage in teaching, scholarship and research. The teaching role is fulfilled through the development of course materials (including assessment), monitoring course presentations, examining, and contact with students through day-schools, on-line forums etc.
- b) Academic staff based in regional and national centres work primarily in one or more designated region or nation. Their core role is to manage the work of part-time associate lecturers, to ensure effective interaction between their academic unit and their region or nation and to undertake external liaison, for instance with other universities and employers.
- c) More than 8000 associate lecturers are located in the regional and national centres. Each one usually supports a group of around 20 students. They play a critical role in enabling

the University to operate at scale. Their primary role is teaching and assessment. They design and provide learning activities that supplement those in the course materials supplied to students. This allows them to customise teaching of the course to the particular group of students or local situation. They provide a local presence and act as a conduit for feedback on students' experience on a course to the course team that designed it.

These staff are supported by administrative, academic-related and technical staff at Walton Hall and in the region and nation offices. This structure is designed to ensure that each region or nation centre is a hub of academic life, acting as a strong local source of advice and guidance.

### ***Development of the Practice***

The University regularly reviews its governance structures to ensure that committees are working effectively and that the committee structure is appropriate for business. Senate is the senior authority of the university having overall responsibility in quality assurance matters. Senate delegates detailed operations to its sub-structure committees designed to cover the major academic responsibilities of the university.

A review of Governance in 2005 led to reduction in the size of the University Senate, making it a representative body and enhancing its effectiveness. University Senate concentrates on 'major issues of academic strategy, policy, priority and performance'. It has specific responsibility for the approval of 'academic strategies and policy frameworks' (in particular in the areas of academic quality assurance, curriculum, assessment and awards including collaborative/partnership arrangements, learning, teaching and student policy and research).

This case study presents a broad description of the governance processes in place since 2005, that allow the Open University to operate in a manner that maintains academic rigour and standards within a collegial academic environment.

### ***Description of the Practice***

University Senate is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and membership includes the Vice Chancellor's Executive team, ex-officio, and elected academic, academic-related and management staff representing Walton Hall (the centre) and the nations and regions. Associate lecturers and students are also represented on Senate. The participation of students and associate lecturers has been enhanced by the establishment of the Students Association Senate Reference Group and the Associate Lecturer Senate Reference Group, which provide support for the student and associate lecturer elected members of Senate.

*CS 2.18 Staff are represented on governance structures. (PI: 2.18.1)*

*CS 2.19 Appropriate learner representation is included in decision-making processes. (PI: 2.19.1)*

Following the review of Governance, the Senate sub-structure was simplified and key activities were integrated through the creation of the Curriculum, Awards and Validation Committee and the Learning, Teaching and Student Support Committee. The roles of

*CS 2.1 The organizational structure of the institution is appropriate for its operations (PI: 2.1.3)*

all committees were clarified and terms of reference revised with clear statements of committee responsibilities for quality assurance and enhancement.

Annual Effectiveness Reviews have been established for all committees of Senate which involve analysis of committee business, assessment of appropriateness and fit of terms of reference and reflection on overall effectiveness of the committee operation. An evaluative review of the effectiveness of these changes has been planned.

Faculty committees are responsible to the Senate for recommending and implementing a plan covering academic activity, including curricula and the general development of research, and for the maintenance of educational quality and standards in the broad subject area covered by the central academic unit concerned. Faculty committees report direct to Senate or to its subsidiary committees as appropriate.

Senate provides leadership and guidance within a critically important framework that sustains the relationships between Senate and Council of the University. The Strategic Planning and Resources Committee brings the Vice-Chancellor and senior officers of the university together with the Pro-Chancellor and members of Council. This committee considers all major decisions relating to the operation and direction of the university, including business and academic matters. An annual weekend meeting of Council provides an opportunity for strategic discussions and framing of the coming year's priorities.

*CS 1.6 Relevant stakeholder groups are represented in the policy formulation process to encourage ownership and to facilitate feedback and openness (PIs: 1.6.1, 1.6.2)*

### **Responsibilities and Delegations**

The Management Structure of the University is represented in an organogram that is presented on the University website and in annual planning documents. At the highest level, the Vice-Chancellor, the Pro Vice-Chancellors (PVCs), the Director (Students), the University Secretary and the Director of Finance make up the Vice-Chancellor's Executive (VCE). VCE meets weekly to ensure the timely and effective progress of major business and to review and give guidance on major new proposals. The portfolios of the Pro Vice-Chancellors are clearly stated and indicated by their titles but it is recognised that there are critical interdependencies across and between portfolios.

*CS 2.6 There are clear lines of responsibility and accountability within the institution and the roles of staff are clearly spelt out. (PI: 2.6.1)*

Deans have responsibility for academic matters and resources in their academic area. They report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Curriculum and Awards, and as necessary to other PVCs. To ensure integration across areas and between the layers of management Deans meet regularly (a) as the Deans and Directors Group, (b) separately and collectively with the PVC, Curriculum and Awards, (c) with the Vice-Chancellor, and (d) as a group jointly with other members of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive and the Executive as a whole. Deans are also invited to make an annual presentation on their strategic priorities to the VCE.

Deans are supported by a bespoke Faculty executive including Associate Deans who are responsible for particular functions (including those represented in the portfolios of the PVCs). This organisation is designed to align with the functional distribution of responsibility between Pro Vice-Chancellors and operational needs of the faculties. Associate Deans meet regularly with relevant PVCs and play a critical role

*CS 2.22 Mechanisms are in place to ensure effective coordination among different institutional constituencies. (PIs: 2.22.1, 2.22.2, 2.22.3)*

in linking the PVC portfolio priorities with strategic and operational priorities of the faculties.

The Director (Students) leads the Student Services unit. The unit's senior management includes Heads of Assessment, Examinations, and Awards; Planning and Development; Student Recruitment and Financial Support; Teaching and Learner Support. The Head of the Director's Office is responsible for the Complaints and Appeals Office. Regional and national centres are part of Student Services. Each centre is managed by a Director; the Directors in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have a particularly important role in liaising with devolved governments.

The Learning and Teaching Solutions Unit (LTS), the Institute of Educational Technology and the Library are headed by Directors who report to the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning, Teaching and Quality. The link here is important because between them the Directors of LTS and the Library are responsible for maintaining the networks and other infrastructure that sustains the 'virtual' working of the University and all play a major role in the institution in enhancing the quality of learning and teaching and the development and delivery of learning and course materials.

*CS 1.19 The institution has a policy for the effective use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in support of distance education. (PIs: 1.19.1 , 1.19.2)*

### **Systems for assuring quality**

The University assures the quality of its awards to students through four linked systems which operate through (a) a process that determines whether a course or award design be approved, (b) a robust system of assessment and award of credit, (c) an annual course and award monitoring process, and (d) a Periodic Programme Review Process. Academics from outside the University are involved at all of these four stages as external advisers, external examiners and external reviewers. These processes are reviewed and mapped against relevant Quality Assurance Agency Precepts by the Qualifications Development Group of the Awards Committee and the by Assessment Policy Committee. Major changes to mappings are approved by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.

*CS 8.5 The processes of assessment satisfy the requirements of institutional policy and other appropriate accreditation bodies. (PIs: 8.5.1 , 8.5.3)*

*CS 8.6 The institution ensures the security of assessment processes (PIs: 8.6.1 , 8.6.4)*

*CS 8.7 National and international benchmarks guide assessment. (PI: 8.7.2)*

Curriculum, learning and teaching are managed by the PVC for Curriculum and Awards and the PVC for Learning, Teaching and Quality. Senate receives regular reports on Curriculum matters and takes the major policy decisions but as far as possible delegates curriculum matters to two committees, the Curriculum, Awards and Validation Committee and the Learning, Teaching and Student Support Committee. Both committees and both PVCs have responsibilities for aspects of the four processes that secure quality – with the PVC (Learning, Teaching and Quality) having a specific overall responsibility for quality matters and chairing the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.

At the highest level, quality assurance is brought together in Senate, and the Vice-Chancellor's Executive. Below that, the Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee is a single point of reference in this area, its statement of purpose indicates it has been specifically set up to 'assure ... Senate that quality assurance

*CS 1.16 The institution has a stated policy with regard to quality assurance and monitoring in all aspects of its operations. (PIs: 1.16.1 , 1.16.2)*

arrangements are appropriately established and implemented'. It ensures that an effective and integrated framework for quality assurance is in place. The Quality Office acts as the agent of the Committee in this respect, standing as guardian, for example, of the University's Guide to Quality and Standards. The Quality Office also supports the PVC (Learning, Teaching and Quality) in 'liais[ing] widely across the University with colleagues responsible for aspects of quality, including relevant Associate Deans in each academic unit, on policy and strategy and specific quality-related issues'.

*CS 2.7 There are effective channels for communication with potential, current and past students, with key external organizations, and with all staff and tutors involved in the learning-teaching process. (PI:2.7.2)*

Integration is achieved through guidelines, processes, people and the responsibilities formally allocated to them, and a hierarchy of committees. The Curriculum Management Guide is a comprehensive website that provides the core integrative guidelines and brings together policy and guidance on all matters of curriculum design and presentation.

The Stage Gate Process is the core integrative course approval process. Through it the University identifies points in the development and presentation of a course where an explicit review is undertaken and an explicit decision made. There are five key decision points that cover the lifecycle of a course. A similar process is followed for Awards. At each stage there is a 'Gate Keeper' who must decide whether the proposal should proceed. The process is holistic. By the end of Stage 3, a project will have been considered and approved from an 'opportunity' and marketing point of view, as a business proposition and – most importantly – as a durable and high quality academic course. Stages 4 and 5 require confirmation that the project meets all appropriate academic standards, is feasible in technical and resource terms, continues to be in line with the University's Strategic Objectives, and matches market opportunities.

*CS 1.5 To achieve its stated objectives, the institution has systematic and transparent procedures for planning and development. (PI: 1.5.1 , 1.5.2)*

Decisions about new courses, awards and programmes then work at three levels relating to (a) academic content and integrity, (b) the ability to match the investment of resources to the likely demand over a short or long term, and (c) the fit of the new course, award or programme to the strategic objectives of the University.

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All course teams review their courses annually. The process draws together data on course populations, on retention and on pass and performance rates within a course, together with student feedback and the narrative report from External Examiners. Where there is information to suggest remedial action may be required, a

*CS 5.12 The programmes are evaluated on the basis of the learners' achievement of the intended learning outcomes. (PI: 5.12.1)*

Course Team will act on its own account to propose and carry through changes where no new resource is involved (e.g. the type and scope of an assessment). Annual course review reports, course post-launch and life-cycle reports and external examiner reports for the compulsory and core optional courses, are considered by Programme Committees or their sub-groups.

The resulting reports and the data are also considered at Faculty or School level in a process usually led by an Associate Dean. As well as ensuring that appropriate scrutiny has been carried out, this process enables discussion of the recommendations requiring new resources. University oversight of the processes takes place through the University Student Experience Advisory Group (SEAG). Reports from course reviews are considered by Programme

Committees as part of an Annual Review Process of Awards. Programme Committees review and assess the continuing standards and quality of the awards for which they are responsible. Oversight of curriculum matters, and thus Programme Committees, rests with the University's Curriculum, Awards and Validation Committee and with the PVC, Curriculum and Awards.

The final strand enabling the University to assure the standards and quality of its credit and awards is the Periodic Programme Review. The Review Panel considers an extensive self-review document and supporting evidence including marked student assessment tasks. The Panel will usually also meet students and associate lecturers working within the Programme. The Review Report is submitted first to the relevant Programme Director for checking matters of fact, and to the PVC (Learning, Teaching and Quality) for University approval. The Report is then submitted to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee and a recommendation is made to Senate.

*CS 1.17 There is a system for implementing and reviewing the quality assurance procedures of the institution (PIs: 1.17.1,1.17.2)*

### ***Resources***

The University's approach to governance is one that integrates responsibilities into the roles of staff across the University. As a consequence it has no direct resource costs, although involvement in the governance process is part of the workload of staff at all levels. Senior staff of the University carry the highest levels of responsibility for governance processes, chairing central committees and final decisions relating to academic policy are made the highest level committee, the Senate.

### ***Requirements for Adoption and Adaptation***

The governance structures and processes adopted by the OU have much in common with most universities but have been designed to reflect the processes associated with the development and production of open and distance learning resources and courses. The Open University's governance structures allow it to operate in a manner that maintains academic rigour and standards within a collegial academic environment.

The OU's approach is one that is highly integrated and, at scale, the governance structures and processes are possibly more complex than those that would be required in a smaller institution. However in developing governance processes that ensure academic quality, any university would need to ensure that the key decision-making points have been identified and that appropriate checks and balances are in place.

While smaller institutions may wish to implement a simpler governance structure with a smaller number of committees, care should be taken to ensure that major stakeholders have the opportunity to contribute to key academic decisions and that all major areas of academic activity are addressed. Effective functioning of committee structures requires clear explication of the roles and responsibilities of each committee and the relationships between them. It is also essential that governance structures are monitored regularly and systematically to ensure that they remain appropriate and effective.

## ***Outcomes and Impact***

The Open University has a demonstrated track record in the successful provision of open and distance learning. Over two million students have graduated from the University, providing evidence of the OU's capacity to deliver high quality supported open learning at scale. In the United Kingdom's National Student Survey, the OU consistently rates as the university with the highest levels of student satisfaction, outperforming conventional universities. The rates of student retention and progression compare favourably with those of conventional on-campus universities and the OU is justifiably proud of its success in supporting the successful study and completion of students with disabilities. The quality of the OU's academic programmes is positively assessed by external agencies such as the Quality Assurance Agency and discipline-specific accrediting bodies.

The clearly defined governance structure and associated processes have contributed to ensuring that the learning materials are of consistently high quality, that the programmes of study are academically rigorous, that quality standards are maintained and that learner support throughout a student's academic life is maintained at the highest level. This has enabled the OU to convince sceptics that it is certainly possible to provide the highest quality educational experience via supported open learning.



## Case Study - 2

### **BEST PRACTICE CASE STUDIES IN DISTANCE HIGHER EDUCATION: MATE (I) PROGRAMME: TRANSFORMING TEACHER EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT**

*Chandra Gunawardena*

#### ***Editor's Note***

*This case study describes the development and offering of the Master of Arts in Teacher Education – International (MATE I) by the Open University of Sri Lanka in response to the national need for improving the quality of teacher educators through teacher educator development. MATE (I) is an innovative, practitioner-oriented professional development programme designed in partnership with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). The good practices are reflected through Criterion 5- Programme Design and Development; Criterion 7 – Learner Support and Progression; and Criterion 8 – Learner Assessment and Evaluation in Standards and Performance Indicators of Distance Higher Education Institutions in Section 2. Criteria Standards (CS) are boxed and Performance Indicators (PIs) are given in parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***The Institutional Context***

The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) is a national university constituted under the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978 and the Open University of Sri Lanka Ordinance No. 1 of 1980. It is the only University in the country where students are able to pursue tertiary education solely in the distance mode.

OUSL comprises a Central Campus which is located in Nawala, Nugegoda, and Regional Centres and Study Centres located throughout the island. The University uses a multimedia system with print material as the core element, supported by day schools, workshops, laboratory work and practicum.

The University consists of four Faculties: Humanities and Social Sciences; Natural Sciences; Engineering; and Education. The Faculty of Education consists of three Departments: Secondary and Tertiary Education; Early Childhood and Primary Education; and Special Needs Education. Together these three departments conduct 12 teacher education programmes, of which nine are offered by the Department of Secondary and Tertiary Education. The Master of Arts in Teacher Education (International) is one of the flagship programmes of this Department.

#### ***The Development of the Practice***

Most countries give priority to teacher education, yet the professional development of the teacher educators remains the responsibility of the teacher educators themselves. They rarely get the opportunity to update their knowledge or acquire needed skills to perform effectively as teacher educators. The World Bank's Teacher Education and Teacher Development Project (1996) proposed in-country training

<i>CS 3.3 Research into the needs and expectations of learners provides inputs to policy making in the institution (PI:3.3.2)</i>
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for teacher educators in Sri Lanka and the OUSL Master of Arts in Teacher Education (MATE) programme, which was initially developed to fulfill this need, was substantially revised and transformed into a unique practitioner-oriented programme. This novel programme, called MATE – International (MATE-I), to make it internationally marketable, was launched in February 2005. It was the first postgraduate programme that focused specifically on teacher educator development in the country.

*CS 5.1 The programmes of the institution reflect the institutional mission, goals and objectives (PI: 5.1.1).*

### ***Description of the Practice***

The uneven and poor performance of teachers has been identified as a major barrier to successful implementation of educational reforms in Sri Lankan education since 1997 (Gunawardena & Lekamge, 2003; Gunawardena et al, 2002; Jayasena, 2003; Perera et al, 2003).

The MATE (I) Programme was developed in response to the national need for improving the quality of teacher education through teacher educator development. The overall goal of the programme was to develop among teacher educators competencies and practices in relation to:

*CS 5.2 The programme objectives are clearly defined and focus on the training and development of knowledge, attitudes and skills and their application in professional practice*

- teaching and learning strategies, including assessment of learning outcomes,
- design, development and evaluation of curricula and curriculum related areas design development and use of educational technologies in teaching and learning
- teaching as a profession and the professional roles and responsibilities of teachers
- management and leadership in and related educational activities
- research and evaluation of teaching, learning, and related educational activities

*CS 5.9 The Programme curriculum is sufficiently comprehensive for learners to achieve the stated objectives of the programme and reflects current knowledge and practice (PI:*

The above areas were related to the functions that teacher educators perform. The learning outcomes of each course clearly articulate how the learners would benefit by following the respective courses.

The practice orientation of this programme comprised a paradigm shift which required an several training workshops for existing teaching staff. This was achieved through an advanced training workshop on instructional design facilitated with the support of the Commonwealth of Learning (Naidu, 2004; Schank, et al. (1994).

*CS 5.5 Programmes are developed and modified in consultation with relevant industry and professional bodies and display sensitivity to changes in social and market demands*

The MATE (I) Programme underwent continuous scrutiny by peers, at national and international levels. The study schedules and the readings developed by the Course Teams were moderated by academics from sister universities (Colombo, Peradeniya and Malaya).

The novel feature of the MATE (I) Programme is its use of scenarios in its courses to scaffold the teaching and learning activities. These scenarios offered opportunities for students to learn by doing, and critically reflect on their practice with the help of expert advice from their teachers and practitioners in the field. The scenarios developed were ‘authentic’ and ‘anchored’ and were

*CS 5.10 The Programme curriculum is sufficiently comprehensive for learners to achieve the stated objectives of the programme and reflects current knowledge and practice (PI:*

connected to the students’ learning context. As a result of carrying out the prescribed learning activities, the learners would be able to accomplish the intended learning outcomes of the programme.

The programme uses a mixed mode of delivery where print, face-to-face contact sessions, electronic communication and supplementary online and multimedia resources are integrated. The printed study materials comprise a study guide and a resource pack for all courses. A detailed study schedule in each study guide specifies the week-by-week learning activities that students are expected to complete for that course. All assessment requirements are also described therein.

*CS 5.8 The programme provides information for learners which includes a description of the aims, objectives and learning outcomes, target groups, teaching-learning processes, means of delivery, support services, .. . of*

While the use of scenarios served as the base for learning, the MATE (I) as a postgraduate degree programme also required a theoretical base which the students could draw upon. Essential and additional readings provided access to theoretical and empirical literature relevant for each course which the students could use for learning.

With the development of teacher educators as the overall goal of the MATE (I) Programme, the Faculty of Education had to use a more flexible approach in the selection of students for the Programme.

*CS 5.7 Access to the programme is as open as possible with flexible entry*

Thus even though only those applicants who possess a Bachelor of Education or Postgraduate Diploma in Education from recognized universities are eligible for selection to a Masters Programme at OUSL, teacher educators in the system possessing qualifications from other degree granting institutions were also considered as eligible. Similarly in view of the instructional role of school principals in developing their teachers on a continuous basis, they were also made eligible. It was felt that the general teacher population in the country would benefit from this improvement of the quality of teacher educators.

The programme comprises six courses and a portfolio project, to be implemented in the three, six-month semesters and which can be completed in a minimum duration of one and a half years.

Semester	Courses	
1	ESP 2240: Teacher Educator as a Teaching-Learning Specialist	ESP 2646: Learning Portfolio
	ESP 2241: Teacher Educator as a Curriculum Developer	
2	ESP 2242: Teacher Educator as an Educational Technologist	
	ESP 2243: Teacher Educator as a Professional	
3	ESP 2244: Teacher Educator as an Educational Manager and Leader	
	ESP 2245: Teacher Educator as a Researcher	

The scenarios and the essential readings for each course give sufficient focus to issues of national and global priority such as gender, equity, inclusion, diversity, environment, social justice values and ethics. Thus in ESP 2243 – Teacher Educator as a Professional, emphasis is given to professional attitudes that teachers should cultivate, values such as equity, fairness to all students, ethical dimensions of teaching, teacher commitment and need for continuing professional development. As in all other programmes of study offered by the OUSL, flexibility of the MATE (I) programme allows students to complete courses at their own pace.

CS 5.10 The programme design and development pays attention to gender equity, multiculturalism, social justice and cohesion, ethical values and environmental sustainability

In the MATE (I) as the nature of learning and teaching becomes more situated in a rich and meaningful context, conventional methods of assessment of learning outcomes become inadequate. The assessment of learning in such a context becomes an integral part of the learning and teaching process. Challenging activities have been designed and carefully crafted to develop teacher educators' competencies as opposed to simple mastery of processes, procedures and theories. These activities lead to the completion of several assignments which are formally assessed (MATE (I), 2004).

CS 5.12 The programmes are evaluated on the basis of the success with which learners achieve the stated objectives (PIs:5.12.1 &

The MATE (I) is unique in being the only programme for which the University Senate allowed degrees to be awarded without students having to sit for a written examination.

## ***The Resources***

*A complete instructional package including the key components mentioned below are provided for the students:*

- *Programme Handbook,*
- *Study Guide – Containing,*
  - *learning scenarios, learning activities and assessment tasks of each course and*
  - *a detailed study schedule specify week-to-week activities students need to perform*
- *Resource Pack – Containing*
  - *Essential Readings*
  - *Additional Readings*
  - *List of Recommended Readings*
  - *Multimedia Resource materials*

CS 5.8 The programme provides information for learners which includes a description of the aims, objectives and learning outcomes, target groups, teaching-learning processes, means of delivery, support services, scheme of assessment, credit and time requirements (PI: 5.8.3).

In addition to the essential readings and additional readings provided in print form in all the courses, selected multimedia resources are provided for students in the Resource Pack, for certain courses (ESP 2242, ESP 2244 and ESP 2245).

The students following the MATE (I) Programme have access to a rich and resourceful learning environment. The Programme conducts its face-to-face activities (Day Schools and Workshops) only at the central campus which has excellent library resources including

access to internet and computer laboratories. ESP 2242 course makes use of online discussion forums to support and facilitate student interaction and online collaborative learning activities closely related to student assessment tasks.

### ***The Impact/ Outcomes***

The programme has been continuously evaluated by the Course Team. One of these evaluations by Karunanayake (2006) focused on identifying the challenges faced by students and staff in adopting this new approach to teaching and learning. It used questionnaires, student reflections in their Learning Portfolios, interviews with lecturers, focus group discussions with students and informal observations. Naidu (2008) evaluated the Programme for the Commonwealth of Learning through extensive discussions with a range of staff and other stakeholders. In addition the faculty has carried out small-scale studies on Learning Portfolios (Lekamge and Karunanayake, 2007), feedback of examiners on assignments (Gunawardena, 2007) and a critical introspection of the total programme (Karunanayake et al, 2008).

5.13 Student satisfaction relative to the quality of education and training services provided is
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The findings of Karunanayake's (2006) study revealed that this novel programme was very challenging as well as a demanding process for the staff as well as students. Yet, it was also a uniquely enriching experience. The learners were increasingly engaged in collaborative, reflective and self-regulated learning. Facilitation of collaboration via carefully designed learning activities and online support were very useful. A sense of achievement is observed to be developing among the learners as a group. Gunawardena's study (2007) found that the feedback given by a majority of examiners on assignments submitted for the MATE (I) were detailed and adequate and the majority had given either commendatory or developmental feedback. However, she pointed out the need to provide further training to some examiners on giving feedback. Through content analysis of Learning Portfolios, Lekamge and Karunanyake (2007) found that through engaging in self-reflection, students had developed skills of critically evaluating their own performance and were thus able to improve themselves. Inclusion of evidence in their portfolios had further enhanced student creativity.

Naidu (2008) found that, as a result of this exercise, there had been a considerable amount of capacity building among academic staff in the Faculty in relation to teaching and learning generally. The staff had become *learning-centered* in all of their teaching activities, not just in the MATE-I program. The faculty have also developed in relation to their academic publications output. The MATE-I team have produced several scholarly papers based on this work. These include several conference papers at local and international fora, two journal articles and one book chapter. (Gunawardena, 2007; Gunawardena et al, 2004; Gunawardena & Karunanayake, 2008; Lekamge & Karunanayake, 2007; Karunanayake et al, 2005; 2007; 2008; Naidu et al, 2005; 2006; 2007).

### ***Requirements for adoption and adaptation***

While the scenarios on which the MATE (I) Programme was developed, were undoubtedly unique for Sri Lanka, the similarities that exist between Sri Lanka and other countries in South Asia indicate that most of these scenarios and the Essential Readings could be easily adapted for the South Asian context and even for the East African context.

The thing that has evoked interest in the MATE (I) Programme from various groups (e.g., New Zealand, Australia, India, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and United Kingdom to name a few) is its innovative pedagogical design which challenged learners and compelled them to engage in a number of prescribed learning activities. This pedagogical design can be adopted by any teacher education institution whose faculty is enterprising and willing to commit themselves to a paradigm shift from traditional transmission mode to an innovative transformational mode. Now that a model is available, adoption and adaptation becomes less of a challenge than when the Programme was initially developed.

It is essential that the faculty who wish to adopt the Programme undergo at least a brief training to understand the pedagogical design underlying it.

Institutions wishing to adopt or adapt the Programme would need to negotiate with the Vice-Chancellor of the OUSL regarding costs, intellectual property rights etc.

### ***Acronyms***

OUSL	Open University of Sri Lanka
MATE (I)	Master of Arts in Teacher Education (International)
COL	Commonwealth of Learning

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## Case Study – 3

### **HARNESSING ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY IN COURSE DEVELOPMENT TO ENHANCE LEARNER SATISFACTION IN THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA**

*Buddhini Gayathri Jayatilleke; Geetha Udayangani Kulasekera and Uma Coomaraswamy*

#### ***Editor's Note***

*Achieving learner satisfaction is the primary objective of course design and delivery at the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL). This case study describes how a well-established and operational feedback loop for reflective practice enabled the incorporation of technological advances and new approaches to teaching and learning into successive iterations of a science course. Good practices in this study relate to Criterion 2 – Management, Organisational Culture and Leadership; Criterion 3 – the Learners; Criterion 5 – Programme Design and Development; Criterion 6 – Course Design and Development; Criterion 7 – Learner Support and Progression; and Criterion 8 – Learner Assessment and Evaluation in Standards and Performance Indicators of Distance Higher Education Institutions in Section 2. Criteria Standards (CS) are boxed and Performance Indicators (PIs) are given in parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***The Institutional Context***

Teaching science disciplines through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) methodology was regarded as a challenge a few decades ago because of the perceived difficulty of explaining abstract scientific concepts, developing skills and building the necessary competency to carry out practical applications without conducting demonstrations and providing opportunities for hands on practice to illustrate abstract concepts.

The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL), established in 1980 (MOHE, 1980) took up this challenge and launched the Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) Degree programme in 1983 as one of its first degree programmes. At that time the major aim was to reach out and provide an alternative route into higher education for adult learners who had missed the opportunity to study in the conventional system, especially in the fields of science and engineering.

Teaching Microbiology through ODL was even more challenging as the concepts in Microbiology and the microbial processes are abstract and difficult to comprehend. However, the challenge was taken up in 1989-90 and specially designed course materials were developed for distance learners.

#### ***The development of the Practice***

The Microbiology course was offered for the first time in 1991 as part of the B.Sc Degree programme. Its course material was developed based on the curriculum in conventional universities. Although it was expected to be learner-friendly, feedback from learners indicated was negative. There was therefore an urgent need to modify the course.

*CS 3.4 The institution has formal and informal mechanisms and procedures in place to obtain feedback from learners (PIs: 3.4.1, 3.4.2).*

Supported by the Department for International Development Project {(DfID, 1995–1998), Weerasinghe, 1999} the Microbiology course team enhanced their capacity in materials development and transformed the existing materials to meet the required academic standards.

*CS 4.1 Sufficient, qualified and skilled academic, staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for the learners (PI: 4.1.5).*

However, learners still found it difficult to master certain abstract concepts and processes. The Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA) workshops on multimedia courseware for capacity building of academics at OUSL, helped the course team to incorporate interactive multimedia (IMM) into the learning package.

Evaluation of IMM revealed that in order to be successful, learners needed to use the IMM regularly as a learning resource at their own pace and at a convenient time.

This was made possible by the establishment of National Online Distance Education Service (NODES) Access Centres (NACs) across the country. Eighteen years later, the course is now being transformed into a blended-online format with the collaboration of the Distance Education Modernisation Project (DEMP) of Sri Lanka.

*CS 3.3 The institution has formal and informal mechanisms and procedures in place to obtain feedback from learners (PIs: 3.3.1, 3.3.2).*

The meticulous commitment of the course team members, the partnerships and collaboration with local and international institutions have paved the way to achieve the ultimate goal; to fulfil learner satisfaction. During this period, some effective practices emerged, and subsequently these practices have been adopted b institution-wide.

### ***Description of the Practice***

The development of the course can be categorised chronologically into four distinct phases, closely tied with the development of technology resources of the OUSL.

#### **Phase I - Correspondence Approach**

The Microbiology course was first offered as a final year course in the B.Sc Degree Programme as a pre-requisite course to many other Botany courses. Core materials were in print format and skills and techniques were taught in face-to-face laboratory sessions.

Course material development was outsourced to a Microbiologist at a conventional university as OUSL did not have in-house expertise in Microbiology or skills to develop self-instructional materials. The materials lacked the interactivity that was essential for distance learners. The course was like a correspondence course and exhibited the characteristics of the first generation of Distance Education (Nipper, 1989).

When student evaluations of the course revealed learner dissatisfaction with the Microbiology course materials, the University responded by giving them more face-to-face teaching sessions. Thus there was a tendency to deviate from ODL and adopt a more conventional approach.

*CS 8.11 Learner satisfaction with the programme is appropriately measured (PI: 8.11.1).*

As a remedial measure, the course team re-structured the course using an integrated approach.

## Phase II – Integrated Approach

A course team approach was used from the planning stage to embed quality assurance procedures into course design and development. The Course Team consisted of a course writer, a subject editor, language editors, media designers, graphic designers and educational technologists.

*CS 6.7 The course development process incorporates a range of relevant expertise (PIs: 6.7.1, 6.7.2).*

As distance learners are a heterogeneous group, the first task was to identify the needs of the target audience in relation to their motivation, learner characteristics, learning needs, educational requirements, and available resources for studying. Secondly, organisational factors such as the range of available media and resources for teaching and learner support were considered in planning the appropriate teaching strategies. Finally, the course was re-designed adopting instructional design principles (Melton, 1997).

*CS 6.1 The courses are designed according to the stated programme objectives (PIs: 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3).*

Instructional design was carried out through a hierarchical analysis, identifying broad aims and objectives, considering expected knowledge, skills and attitudes that have to be mastered by the learner at the end of the course. This led to the identification of the course units, sessions and learning outcomes. The learning experiences were designed according to the learning outcomes considering the nature of the subject (Coomaraswamy, 1999).

*CS 6.8 Instructional design includes assessment of learning against stated learning outcomes (PI: 6.8.1).*

Developmental testing was carried out with different stakeholders as a quality intervention and appropriate amendments were made to the text.

Microbiology is a subject that deals with abstract concepts and microbial processes which are hard to visualise. In order to achieve certain intended learning outcomes, the potential of using appropriate audio-visual materials was explored. Print medium was used for explanations of factual and conceptual knowledge and the audio-visual materials were used to explain some of the procedural knowledge and to create interest.

The print materials were especially designed for ODL incorporating many pedagogical features such as advance organisers, activities (self-assessment questions and review questions) to judge their performance on achieving intended learning outcomes.

As English was the second language of the learners, special attention was paid to the written language. Hence, language was simple and conversational in order to help the learner to have an internal dialogue with the text. To assist the learners a tri-lingual (Sinhala, Tamil and English) glossary was incorporated in the package.

The writing of the course materials were carried out according to the *Distance Writing - Bridging the Gap* (Kulatunga *et al*; 1995, Padmaperuma & Weerasinghe, 1999) and the desk-top publishing was carried out using *OUSL House Style* (Samarawickrema, 1996; Padmaperuma & Weerasinghe, 1999).

*CS 6.5 Standard formats for instructional design and development are in place and are followed (PIs: 6.5.1, 6.5.2, 6.5.3).*

This course was the first at OUSL to use an integrated approach merging video programmes into the core print course material. This was recommended as a model for OUSL by the review panel of the DfID project and considered as a positive outcome of the entire DfID project.

Evaluation of the course materials showed that students still had difficulties in learning abstract genetic processes and there was a need for further improvement.

### Phase III - Interactive Multimedia approach

Animations were identified as the best way of explaining abstract microscopic dynamic processes. An interactive multimedia (IMM) with animations was therefore developed, incorporating interactive pedagogical components such as self assessment questions with immediate feedback, glossary etc. Learners had the flexibility to take control of the learning process according to their own pace.

*CS 6.2 Course design takes into consideration and incorporates recent advances in ICT (PIs: 6.2.1, 6.2.2)*

Finally, the IMM was evaluated by the various stakeholders and modified further. The findings of the user-testing of the interactive multimedia revealed that learners perceived their learning experience as rewarding and meaningful (Kulasekera, Jayatilleke & Coomaraswamy, 2007a; b). However, they indicated their preference for using the IMM as a learning tool, whenever they want and at their own pace, rather than visiting the regional centres. This led to the next phase of development.

*CS 6.9 Course design uses appropriate technology to engage and support learners and to provide communication facilities (PIs: 6.9.1, 6.9.2, 6.9.3).*

### Phase IV – Blended Online approach

The blended on-line approach became possible with the introduction of the OUSL learning management system and with the establishment of the NACs. Presently, the development of a blended online course is in progress and IMM will be integrated as a learning resource. The purpose is to integrate learner support with the technology so that learners' needs are met instantly using online support. The course team has managed to reach the fourth generation of distance education; the Flexible Learning Model, combining the benefits of high quality CD-ROM based IMM with the enhanced interactivity (Taylor, 1995).

## ***The resources***

### **Infrastructure**

The printed course materials, study guides etc were produced in the printing press of the OUSL which is being upgraded by the DEMP project.

The video programmes and the interactive multimedia were produced in the studio-complex at the Educational Technology (ET) Division of the OUSL. The studio-complex was donated in 1993 by Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and is currently being digitised through the DEMP project.

Cost for printing and media production is met by the funds generated through student fees. The online course is now being developed by the Department of Botany with the support of the IT Division and the ET Division in collaboration with the DEMP project.

Students acquire laboratory skills in the OUSL science laboratories which were established using government funds and the assistance provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

*CS 7.2 Learner support is provided using a range of media including appropriate ICTs (PIs 7.2.1, 7.2.2).*

Face to face sessions are conducted at the Colombo Regional Centre which is now being modernised through the DEMP project.

### **Human resources**

The overall success of this course is due to the committed course team who were well supported by the qualified, experienced, and competent academic, administrative and non-academic staff of the OUSL at different phases of course design and development, delivery and evaluation. Their salaries are from the government treasury.

*CS 2.21 The institution has a mechanism for constantly streamlining and improving its processes (PI: 2.21.1).*

Learners' active participation in the 'feedback loop' was a rich resource as a driver for the continuous improvement of the course.

### **Collaboration and partnerships as added value**

The course team, was able to develop and redevelop the course as described thanks to the collaboration and partnerships between the University and DfID, JICA, CEMCA, DEMP, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and UNDP. As a result of these partnerships, the OUSL managed to build a strong working relationship with the partners. The capacity building programmes enabled the OUSL to build a pool of expertise in the fields of ODL, Instructional design, writing self-instructional material, producing audio-visual, multimedia and online materials and ODL research in order to maintain the transition of the course design and development process from print to online.

*CS 1.13 The institution has a stated policy on partnerships and collaborations (PIs: 1.13.1,*

### ***Impact and Outcomes***

Enabling learners to achieve the intended learning outcomes is the primary objective of the course design process. Having undergone four major transitions in order to support learning more effectively, the course has managed to provide greater satisfaction to distance learners. As a result, there is considerable pressure on the university from the student community to accelerate the development of courses on this model in other disciplines.

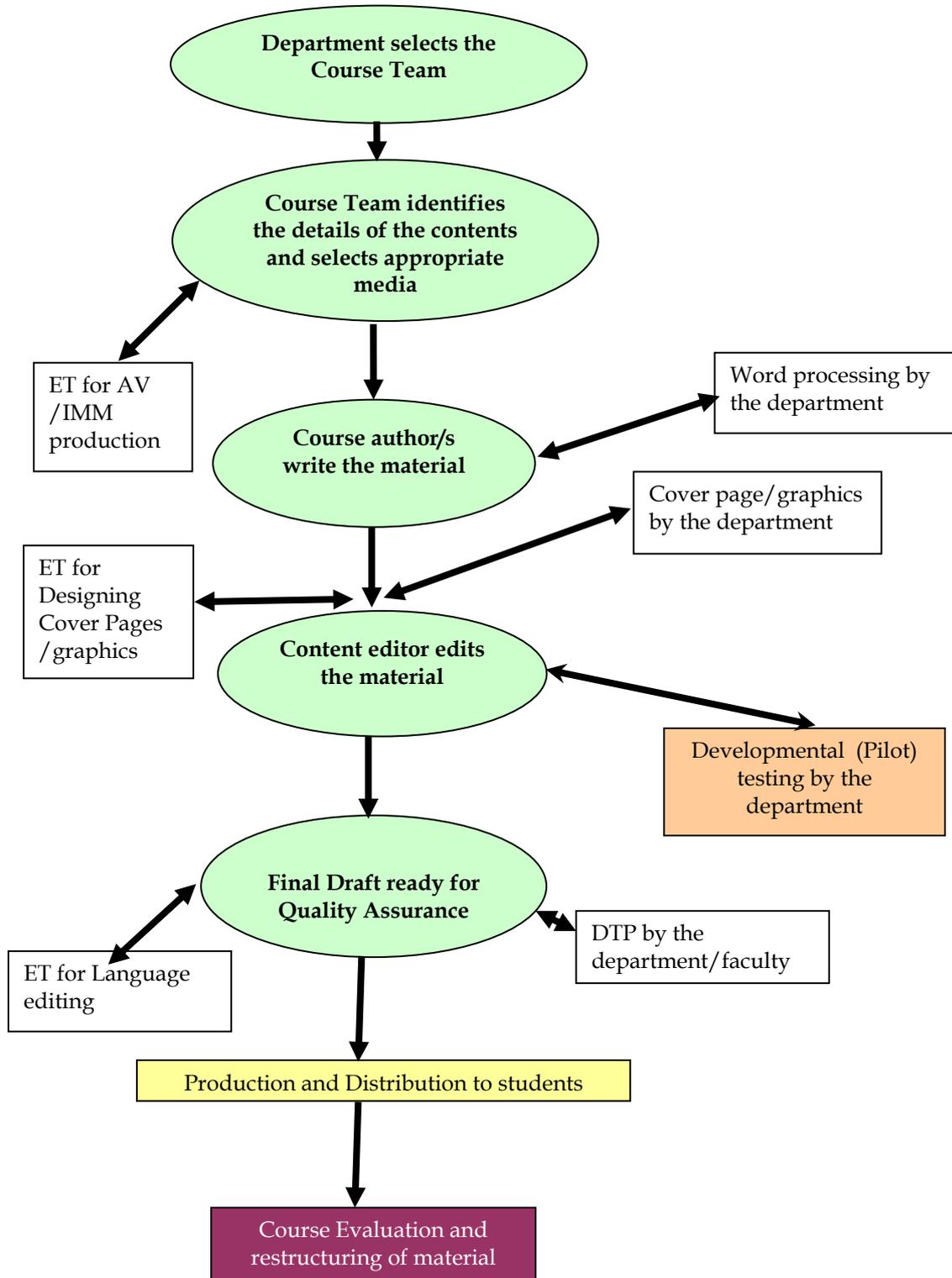
*CS 5.13 Learner satisfaction relative to the quality of education and training provided in the programmes is regularly evaluated (PIs: 5.13.1, 5.13.2, 5.13.3).*

This course is used as an exemplar during capacity building workshops on course material development.

The University established and refined its quality assurance mechanisms for course development and review. The OUSL guidelines and standards for the design and development of study materials are reproduced at Fig. 1.

Reflective practice leading to course improvement is valued by the University as a means of achieving quality enhancement.

**Figure 1 Course Design and Development Process at OUSL**



## ***Requirements for adoption and adaptation***

Effective adoption or adaptation requires the commitment and willingness of the course team to experiment with innovative approaches through a bottom-up participatory process with all the stakeholders. The ability of the chair to direct, take timely decisions, maintain the team spirit and keep the process on track the whole process is vital to the success.

Continuous reflective practices of the course team members with the aim of achieving learner satisfaction is also very critical.

Needs assessment of relevant stakeholders should be carried out before commencing the programme or course in order to identify the needs of the learner, employers, society etc. so that the objectives of the course can be aligned with the needs of the stakeholders.

The key steps in the process are to:

- analyse the needs of the learners
- select appropriate technologies in accordance with the available resources (human and infrastructure) and the nature of the discipline
- design appropriate learning experiences for learners to engage actively in the learning process enabling them to construct the knowledge meaningfully
- carry out regular monitoring with all the stakeholders and incorporating amendments in order to ensure quality standards.

The institution should be willing to work in collaboration and build partnerships to enable the staff to participate in regular capacity building programmes especially in the areas where the required expertise are not available in-house. Furthermore, the institution has to establish a mechanism to cascade training to other staff by designating master trainers who have undergone training under partnership programmes in various fields.

An efficient operational and monitoring structure and a feedback loop should be built in to course design and development and delivery to ensure continuous quality enhancement.

## ***Acronyms***

MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education (Sri Lanka)
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
CEMCA	Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia
IMM	Interactive multi-media
NODES	National Online Distance Education Service (Sri Lanka)
NACs	National Access Centres (Sri Lanka)
DEMP	Distance Education Modernisation Project
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ADB	Asian Development Bank

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## Case Study – 4

# COURSE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT AT OPEN UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

*Dr. Abtar Kaur and Professor Dr. Zoraini Wati*

### **Editor's Note**

*This case study presents in detail the instructional design process and course development for flexi learning by the centre for Instructional Design and Technology at the Open University Malaysia in compliance with the Quality Management System of the University. The good practices reflect Criterion 1 – Vision, Mission and Planning; Criterion 6 – Course Design and Development; Criterion 7 – Learner Support and Progression; Criterion 9 – Infrastructure and Learning Resources in the Standards and Performance Indicators for Distance Higher Education Institutions at Section 2. Criteria Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicator/s (PIs) are given within parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

### **The Institutional Context**

Open University Malaysia (OUM), a consortium of 11 public universities, is one of the first open distance learning institutions set up in Malaysia. In August 2001, 753 students signed up for the inaugural launch of 4 programmes at 12 learning centres distributed throughout Malaysia. The blended learning approach is the main pedagogical strategy used, combining face-to-face learning, self-managed learning and online learning modes (see Figure 1). The main online learning platform is a homegrown learning management system (myLMS- see Figure 2) that is continuously improved particularly in supporting online forum discussions as well as providing a platform to retrieve online course materials. The number of active tutors in 2001 was 45 and a total of 29 modules were designed and developed to support the teaching & learning process. OUM achieved phenomenal growth in 7 years and as of 2008, student numbers grew close to 75,000, with 62 programmes offered, including 554 modules developed in-house, 64 learning centres (see Figure 3) and close to 3700 active tutors. There was therefore an urgent need to rely on experts, technology and collaborative efforts to support all major processes. All programmes and courses offered at OUM undergo a rigorous accreditation process before they are offered. The head of the University is called the President/Vice-Chancellor and is supported by the Senior Vice President and Vice President.



**Figure 1. OUM's Blended Learning Pedagogical Model (Abtar & Ansary, 2005)**

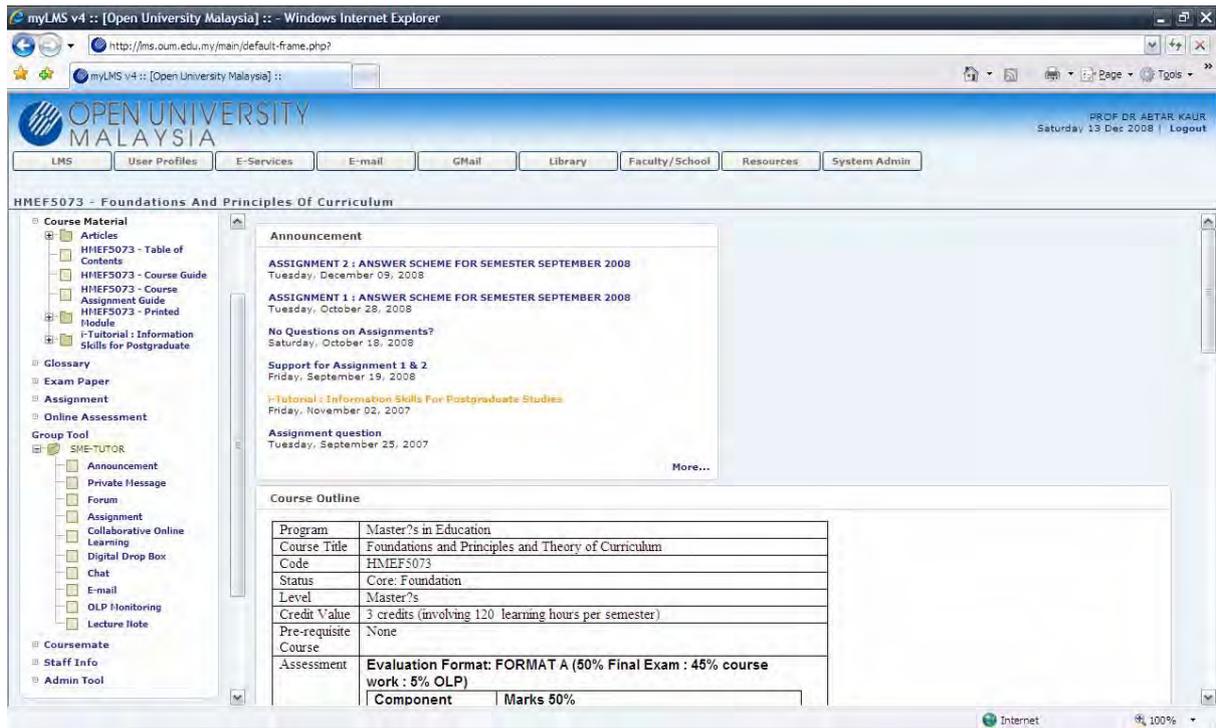


Figure 2. A section of OUMs Learning Management System (myLMS)

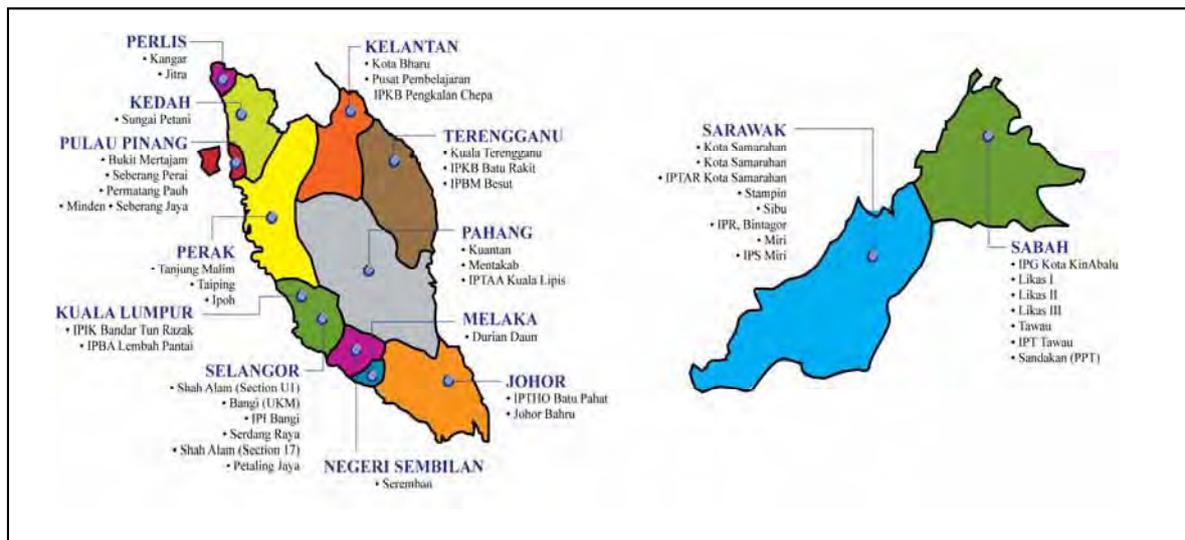


Figure 3. Geographical locations of OUM learning centres

## *Development of the Practice*

Course development was recognized as the pulse of OUM. Thus the Centre for Instructional Design & Technology (CiDT) was set up. The core business was to ensure that the print and digital learning materials developed adhered to sound principles of instructional design and development. Apart from that it was also crucial to identify the technological requirements to support the development and delivery of all learning materials. To ensure courses are produced on time, OUM follows a systems design model and there is strong adherence and relevance to the Performance Indicators created by COL.

## *Description of the Practice*

As OUM seeks to become the leading provider of flexible learning, it has established a Quality Management System (QMS) to provide quality assurance of its processes such as those employed when developing course materials. Part of the QMS entails a series of internal audits that are conducted on academic and administrative units. These are planned and implemented by the Institute of Quality, Research and Innovation (IQRI) on a yearly basis. The quality management team is headed by a Chief Internal Auditor who is a full-time academic staff of the university, assisted by two deputies (one academic and one administrative) and about 60 internal auditors from among OUM academicians and staff. From this pool of auditors, small teams comprising at least four auditors conduct audits internally. For departments maintaining their ISO certification, both internal and external audits on the processes are conducted annually.

*CS 1.17 There is a system for implementing and reviewing the quality assurance procedures of the institution (PIs: 1.17.1,*

*CS 1.16 The institution has a stated policy with regard to quality assurance and monitoring in all aspects of its operations (PIs: 1.16.1, 1.16.2, 1.16.4).*

CiDT is one of four departments in the university that is ISO 9001:2000 certified by SIRIM (Standard and Industrial Research Institute of Malaysia) an external certification body. The main purpose of CiDT's ISO certification is to ensure that various aspects of course design such as the design of print modules undergo a certain set of standardized procedures. At OUM, CiDT works closely with the various faculties in a form of partnership to ensure that learning materials produced are of quality. Figure 4 shows the various processes and timeframe applied in the production of print modules at OUM. Figure 5 illustrates the various aspects considered when developing print modules. This involves steps from designing the course to obtaining feedback from the students for the purpose of improvement.

It is to be noted that while print modules are OUM's core learning materials, other materials that have been developed include multimedia (CD based), learning objects (web-based), audio podcasts (MP3 files) of selected course topics, webcasts of selected course topics and to further support students who are visually impaired, several modules have been read and recorded. The latter are distributed on CDs. In the January 2009 semester, mobile learning (mLearning) will be launched for two compulsory courses: OUMH 1103 Learning Skills for Open Distance Learners and OUMH 1303 English for Oral Communication.

*CS 7.9 Appropriate support and facilities are provided for learners with specific learning difficulties (PIs: 7.9.1, 7.9.2, 7.9.4).*

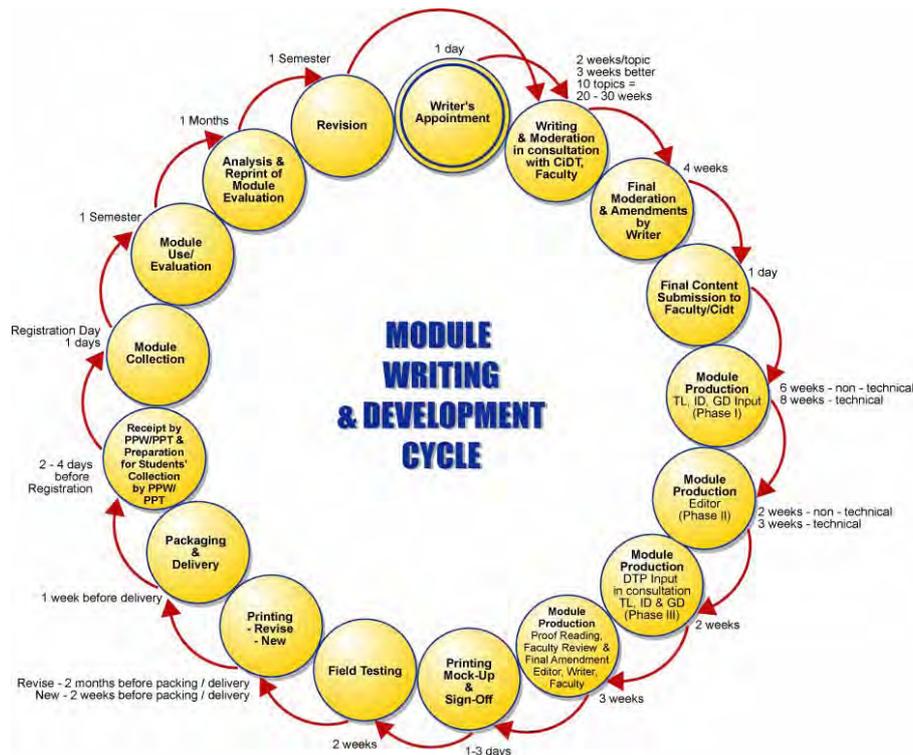


Figure 4. Timeframe for print module development (Abas, 2006)

OUM's strength is on instructional design processes and course development, the comprehensiveness of the components specified in the instructional package developed to support self-managed learning, as well as the clarity of statements of learning outcomes and how learning will be assessed. Also quite notable are performance in terms of media and technology used and how certain skills are cultivated in OUM students.

CS 6.2 Course design takes into consideration various delivery mechanisms and incorporates appropriate and contextualized ICT tools (PIs: 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3,

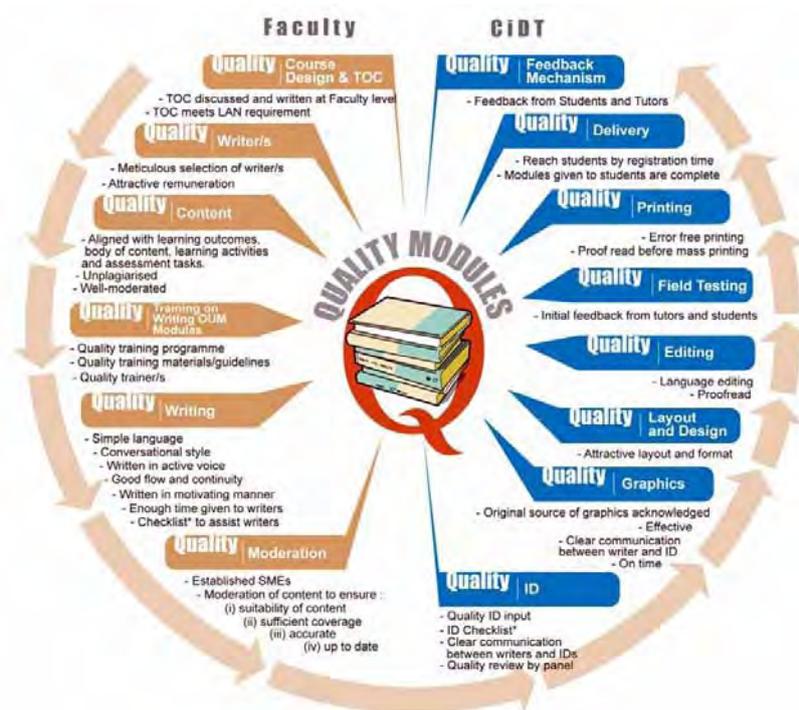
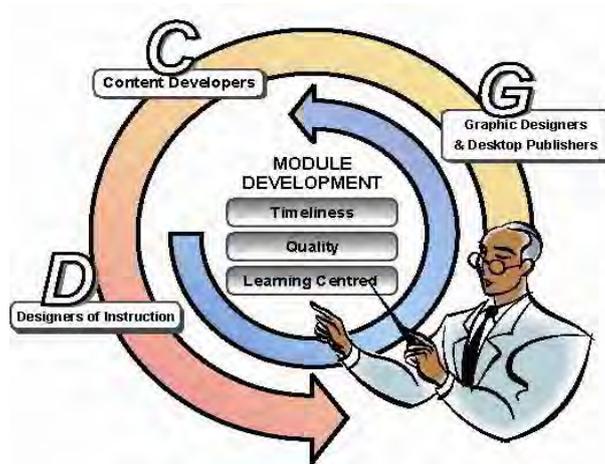


Figure 5. Quality aspects in producing quality modules (Abas, 2006)

## Resources



**CDG MODEL FOR MODULE DEVELOPMENT**

**Figure 6. Core teams for module development (Abas, 2006).**

Figure 6 shows the required resources in terms of having three core teams when designing courses. For example, when producing the print module, content developers or providers of content in the form of subject matter experts, graphic designers and desktop publishers and designers of instruction or instructional designers are instrumental. In addition, there are three elements that are focused on when developing modules. These are factors related to timeliness, quality and learning centredness. For each team, frequent on-the-job training is provided to further sharpen the skills of the team members. Also important are technological resources such as ICT hardware and software as well as financial resources to further support them such as hiring of part-timers during peak times, payment for work done overtime and so on. The basic ICT infrastructure for the team of developers will include an efficient and secure computer network for file transfers, downloading, uploading and making timely backups of files. This includes having ample amount of storage space in the form of hard disks with terabytes of memory.

*CS 6.7 The course development process incorporates a range of relevant expertise (PIs: 6.7.1, 6.7.2).*

*CS 9.1 The institution has access to physical facilities with adequate capacity and resources to conduct academic programmes and administrative functions*

## Impact and Outcomes

OUM adopted a systems design in the initial stages of planning and this provided a structure which was a crucial element for a new and upcoming university. Within the structure many elements worked in tandem: the Centre for Instructional Design & Technology (CiDT) team; the faculty team which consisted of programme coordinators, writers, moderators and support staff; the learning management team; the learning centres; the publisher and eventually the tutors and learners. The one major hurdle encountered was commitment from writers which translated into the following aspects:

*CS 2.10 The production and delivery of course materials are timely, relevant and quality assured.*

- Authentic writing: some writers had the tendency to “plagiarise” content and it was always a tedious task to identify and act on such a practice.

- Meeting deadlines: This was one of the most arduous tasks and held back good instructional design practices. A majority of writers provided content at the last minute and this undermined quality issues.
- Writing style: Most writers were from traditional university settings and tended to write lengthy and impersonalized sentences. Sometimes there were barely any good activities and motivational elements in the content provided to the CiDT.

Despite the challenges noted above, OUM made efforts to continuously improve the processes. In fact there were isolated successes in overcoming the above challenges and the following is an example:

A team of writers wrote the module “Learning Skills for Open Distance Learners”. The writers met often, consulted each other, read and improved each others’ chapters, and supported each other in keeping deadlines checked. The strength was in the selection of writers who were experts in their field and who had proof of written work. The strength was also in “writing together” and having an expert instructional designer on board.

So, in a nutshell, for course design and development to be successful it is of utmost importance that the core team: writers & instructional designers, are people who have the core skills and abilities to write & design, the tenacity to work towards deadlines and the dedication to complete the task successfully.

*CS 6.7 The course development process incorporates a range of relevant expertise (PIs: 6.7.1, 6.7.2)*

### ***Requirements for Adoption and Adaptation***

The core practice is instructional design. With good instructional design practices, much can be turned around. Poor content writing can be improved if the instructional designers are well trained. Having a model for creation of courses and content is fine, but the model is only as good as the quality of instructional design. The following are suggestions on how an ODL institution can emulate course design practices at OUM:

1. Have a team of instructional designers, graphics artist, desk-top publishers, programmers, editors and other audio-visual support staff. The staff must first have minimal competency and need to be continuously trained to the ways of ODL practices. At OUM, we have 12 instructional designers, 6 graphic designers, 4 multimedia programmers, 3 3-D animators, 6 desk-top publishers and 2 language editors. In seven years of operation, we have successfully produced over 520 print modules and e-content for about 20 percent of the total number of courses. In any one year comprising three cycles of production we produce about 150 print modules.
2. Select writers who have something to show-off: a textbook, a monograph, journal articles and other such written materials. Train them well, support them along the writing process by assigning instructional designers and ensure their progress is intimately checked.

*CS 6.8 Instructional design includes assessment of learning against stated learning outcomes.*

*CS 6.5 Standard formats for instructional design and development are in place and are followed (PIs: 6.5.1, 6.5.2)*

3. Have “Plan B, C, D”. Most writers, once trained and let loose, may not contribute successfully to the completion of the modules writing process. Having alternative plans enables the project management team to produce superior materials and on time.
4. Keep cost checked. As in any endeavour, it is extremely crucial to ensure the total cost incurred in course design & development is maintained at most efficient levels and spread out well between the different stake-holders.
5. Ensure efficiency of back-up resources. In an ODL environment, which is still highly dependent on logistics of transport, storage, publishing and distribution, it is important that the systems are all operating in tandem.
6. Always keep the learner in mind. Learner needs are to be constantly evaluated and necessary steps taken to upgrade course design & development.

*CS 6.12 appropriate personnel and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of the course materials and their production process (PIs: 6.12.2. 6.12.3)*

### ***Abbreviations***

OUM	Open University Malaysia
CiDt	Centre for Instructional Design & Technology
myLMS	OUMs Learning Management System
ODL	Open Distance Learning
TOC	Table of Contents
ID	Instructional Design
LAN	National Accreditation Board (now changed to MQA: Malaysian Qualifications Agency)
IQRI	Institute of Quality, Research and Innovation
QMS	Quality Management System

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## Case Study – 5

### **THE USE OF STANDARD DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES IN A TEAM-BASED APPROACH TO THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF ODL COURSES AT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY, VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA.**

*Rob McTavish*

#### ***Editor's Note***

*This case study by the Centre for On-line and Distance Education (CODE) of Simon Fraser University reveals the importance of the development and use of a set of standard development guidelines for the development of distance education courses at a dual mode university. The case study illustrates how the guidelines are used by the course team to streamline the course development and production process, while allowing flexibility at the individual course level. The good practice relates mainly to 2 – Management, Organisational Culture and Leadership, Criterion 6 – Course Design and Development and Criterion in Standards and Performance Indicators of Distance Higher Education Institutions in Section 2. Criterion Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicators (PIs) are given in parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***The Institutional Context***

Simon Fraser University has 8 faculties and 35 academic departments, with 22 000 students dispersed over three campuses in the Metro Vancouver Area in British Columbia, Canada. The Centre for Online and Distance Education (CODE) is a unit within Continuing Studies and is an administrative, rather than an academic, unit. All academic decisions are made by the home department, while CODE provides the instructional design and development support and then looks after course delivery. The Centre focuses mainly on credit offerings of undergraduate courses. Recently, Graduate programmes in both Criminology and Education have been added.

The Centre consists of 32 staff in 4 areas, IT Services, Student Services, Course Materials, and Course Production. Five Programme Directors look after the development of academic programmes, manage courses through development, and provide pedagogical support to instructors during course delivery. Each Programme Director is assigned responsibility for specific Faculties or Departments and works closely with those units to ensure the goals and objectives of the academic unit are represented through the offering of their courses through CODE.

As CODE moved more courses online we began to require better management of our resources. To ensure that resources weren't overtaxed, a plan was put into place to hold a team meeting before development of a course began, which would bring together all the unit managers in CODE, the librarian and key staff such as the copyright specialist, to discuss the development plan. This team meeting was meant to enable all the stakeholders to know the overall plan of the course well in advance of entering the production cycle.

Through research we discovered that often many of our course authors were new to distance education and had diverse ideas about what a distance education course consisted of, or how

it was delivered. As an example, some authors confused computer based instruction with a distance education course. To help authors understand what components were necessary for a distance course a Standard Development Guidelines sheet was compiled to help guide the course author through the process of selecting which deliverables were necessary and why they were needed.

### ***The Development of the Practice***

The team meeting ensured that all stakeholders involved in the development and production of the course were involved from the beginning of the course development cycle. This team meeting was designed to alleviate resource conflicts and to ensure that all key players knew well in advance what the Course Author and Programme Director were planning for the delivery of the course. A loose agenda for the Team Meeting was eventually developed to aid in the management of the meeting and to ensure that all stakeholders had an opportunity to address any concerns they had in relation to the development of the course.

*CS 6.7 The course development process incorporates a range of relevant expertise (PIs: 6.7.1, 6.7.2).*

The development guidelines were developed in collaboration with course authors, development staff, and Programme Directors, and were based upon feedback from both students and instructional staff. Programme Directors often had lists of course components to discuss with course authors, and eventually the Programme Directors collaborated and integrated the lists into a document that eventually became the Standard Development Guidelines.

*CS 6.3 Courses are designed based on learner-centered principles (PI: 6.3.3).*

*CS 6.5 Standard formats for instructional design and development are in place and are followed (PI: 6.5.1).*

### ***Description of the Practice***

Each academic unit selects courses and programmes for distance education development in consultation with the CODE Programme Director (PD). Once a course has been identified for development the PD develops a proposal to take forward to the CODE management committee. The proposal consists of a course description, a rationale for the need for distance delivery, past enrollment statistics, written support from the Faculty or Department, details of the programmatic focus, a description of the course components and resources necessary for delivery such as technology needs and a listing of the deliverables such as textbooks, course reader, DVD's or movies, or special software. This proposal is presented to the management team who determine whether the necessary resources are available and then vote to approve the development. Once approved, the course begins its development cycle.

*CS 6.1 The courses are designed according to the stated programme objectives (PI: 6.1.3).*

At the Team Meeting the course author describes his/her vision of the course and discusses which pedagogical elements of the related face-to-face course he/she would like to replicate in the distance offering. Typically templates are not used, as each course is seen as individual and customized. Nevertheless the Centre applies standards that dictate certain aspects of the course, such as the use and implementation of technology or online tools. A committee consisting of the Heads of IT and Production and three Programme Directors looks after technology adoption in CODE. The committee researches each proposed technology to ensure it can be easily integrated into our existing infrastructure, that students can be fully supported in its use and that the technology enhances rather than impedes learning.

*CS 6.7 The course development process incorporates a range of relevant expertise (PI: 6.7.2)*

The Standard Development Guidelines are intended to streamline the production and development of the course, not constrain the course author. As an example all courses require an introduction unit that provides an overview of the course, course objectives, a detailed listing of course materials, a schedule, details of the assessment measures including a rubric and a write up on the course author. Having a standardized introductory unit ensures that all critical information related to the course is provided to students and also helps students to know where to look for such information in any distance course they take at SFU.

*CS 6.5 Standard formats for instructional design and development are in place and are followed.*

## ***Resources***

The Standard Development Guidelines are distributed to each course author during the team meeting, which is typically before any development tasks have commenced. The team meeting is resource intensive in that it utilizes many person-hours, however there is considerable cost savings in relation to solving and preventing problems that used to occur commonly. There is an option of a second team meeting for more complex courses which is attended only by those directly involved in the development of course components that require further attention.

Each year the management group reviews the Standard Development Guidelines to verify their effectiveness and make any necessary changes. Often as new technologies are added to our repertoire of resources we need to make changes to our processes and policies.

All staff are unionized under the same union that governs all university clerical and technical staff (CUPE), while the management all belong to a professional association (APSA). Wages and annual salary increases are dictated by each collective agreement, as are vacation and benefit entitlements. CODE is responsible for a balanced budget and must take these annual increases into account when preparing the annual budget.

Each year the management staff submit their goals and objectives to the CODE Director and then discuss their goals with both the Director and the Dean of Continuing Studies. A component of these goals and objectives is a plan of the courses and programmes to be developed each year. Recent budget cuts have forced CODE to review their course offerings and ensure that both development and delivery of courses are chosen based on strong enrollment figures.

Team Meetings have helped the unit to cope better with recent budget cuts, as we are able to plan the use of our resources more efficiently with the information provided early in the course production cycle. The Standard Development Guidelines have also helped our budgeting, as Course Authors know well in advance what is required by CODE and submit products that require less remedial work than courses submitted prior to the implementation of the Standard Development Guidelines.

## ***The Impact/Outcomes***

Our Standard Development Guidelines help to ensure that course development follows a prescribed path, while still allowing flexibility within the design of each individual course. Such flexibility ensures that our course authors have the necessary freedom to develop a course that reflects their personal pedagogical beliefs, while respecting our limited resources for both development and delivery.

Prior to implementing our development guidelines each Programme Director worked alone on the development of the course and often problems weren't discovered until well into the production stage. By holding a team meeting and using the guidelines, problems are often detected in the development stage rather than during production when time and resources are more limited.

These two practices have not only saved time and resources, but have also enabled team members to help in the design and development process by being involved early in the development stage. Involving the course production staff early in the development process has helped foster a collaborative team environment where everyone can contribute to the development of the course. Many problems are solved by staff who have an intimate knowledge of the technologies being employed and a diverse set of experiences working with many course authors in all departments.

### ***Requirements for adoption and adaptation***

If the Team Meeting practice is to be adopted by another institution, it is important to identify all the stakeholders, some of whom may not be within the development unit itself, as is the case with the librarians at SFU. Often the departmental librarian is aware of resources that are available in the subject area and has a wealth of experience in dealing with questions from students working on the course assignments.

Team Meetings should have an agenda to ensure all participants have an opportunity to contribute, and also to help ensure that key questions or concerns get addressed as early as possible in the development stage. Although CODE is part of a hierarchical organization, we value the contributions and input of everyone involved in building and developing a course. Nevertheless, final decisions are the responsibility of the Course Author and Programme Director.

Exemplar courses are often shown to course authors during a Team Meeting, particularly when the course author is new to Online and Distance Education. These demonstrations often foster dialogue within the Team Meeting and generate topics for discussion that are relevant to the early planning of a course. The team meeting can also be a useful time to demonstrate possible technologies that may be employed in the course. Attending such presentations and demonstrations with the entire development team enables the course author to ask any questions and have the experts immediately available to address any concerns.

The development guidelines aren't a template to be filled out, they are merely a series of points the course author may take into consideration when beginning the course development process. More detailed frameworks, with specific questions or points may be necessary for some course authors who are not only new to developing distance education courses, but are also new to developing curriculum. Since institutional needs and requirements differ, each institution would need to review their procedures and requirements and perhaps undertake a review of an exemplary course to determine their own development guidelines. Any guidelines developed to assist course authors require constant review and revision to help ensure their continuing usefulness.

## ***7. Glossary of acronyms***

APSA	Academic Professional Staff Association
CODE	Centre for Online and Distance Education
CUPE	Canadian Union of Public Employees
SFU	Simon Fraser University

## Case Study – 6

### DEVELOPING E-LEARNING PROGRAMMES AT THE OUHK

*K. S. Yuen; Eva Tsang and Caroline Leung*

#### *Editor's Note*

*This case study reflects on the strategies employed by the Open University of Hong Kong to meet the challenges of creating a framework to develop e-learning courses for on-line delivery. The approach of the OUHK relates to the performance standards and performance indicators in to Criterion 2 – Management, Organisational Culture and Leadership and Criterion 6 – Course Design and Development in Standards and Performance Indicators of Distance Higher Education Institutions in Section 2. Criterion Statement (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicators (PIs) are given in parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### *The Institutional Context*

The Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK) has been offering distance learning programmes to students in Hong Kong since 1989, principally through printed materials with audio-visual elements and television broadcasts. As the University has expanded, it has sought to broaden the range of programmes it offers to meet students' needs for greater flexibility. To further its commitment to providing diversified learning channels to students using the latest technologies, in October 2007, the OUHK launched its first fully online programme, the Master of Laws in Chinese Business Law (Business Applications). At the same time, the OUHK Centre for eLearning (eCentre) was established, with the aim of expanding the University's e-learning offerings. The eCentre was the first project under the Centre for Innovation, a US\$8.1 million OUHK initiative funded by the government. It provides students with a fully integrated e-learning platform that supports all teaching and learning activities from programme enrolment to graduation.

#### *The development of the practice*

As the OUHK entered a new phase in e-learning, it was faced with the challenge of devising a new framework for the development of e-learning courses specifically tailored to the online context. Such a framework would need to ensure a high level of quality in the course materials and the learning support structure. This case study describes the framework for developing e-learning courses adopted by the OUHK for its Master of Laws in Chinese Business Law (Business Applications) programme, with particular regard to quality assurance.

The development of an online course is necessarily more complex than that of a print-based course because of the wide range of components involved in our e-learning courses. The OUHK has sought to maximize the potential of Web-based learning by providing an interactive, media-rich study environment for our students. Each of the Master of Laws courses contains the following three basic components:

<i>CS 6.2 Course design takes into consideration and incorporates recent advances in ICT (PIs: 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.4).</i>
--

- Multimedia learning materials (including PowerPoint slides with voiceover, flash animations, video presentations, online reference readings, web links and interactive learning activities);
- Communication (including all communication functions such as real-time tutoring, lecturing, sharing of all kinds of information, discussion and collaboration);
- Learning support (including online discussion forum, online assignment submission and return of marked assignments, orientation video/animated study guide, email and e-library services).

*CS 6.4 The course has ample scope for encouraging and developing creative and critical thinking, independent and lifelong learning and interpersonal communication and team work skills (PI: 6.4.1).*

The courses are delivered via the University’s Lotus-based, in-house developed Online Learning Environment (OLE). From their course homepage, students can carry out all their learning activities: access the latest course news, check the course schedules, study the course materials, communicate with their tutors and fellow students, participate in online lectures, tutorials and the discussion board, submit assignments, and have access to the full texts of books and journals of the Electronic Library. *Figure 1* shows the homepage of the B843W Principles and Practices of Chinese Civil Law course.



**Figure 1 Homepage of B843W Principles and Practices of Chinese Civil Law**

The above design is based on our belief that learning takes place more effectively in an interaction-rich learning environment with the following instructional design strategies:

*CS 6.5 Standard formats for instructional design and development are in place and are followed (PIs: 6.5.1, 6.5.2).*

1. Reduced core text compared with print-based learning materials, the amount of the core text for each study unit is reduced. The reduced core content, however, makes frequent reference to other integrated learning elements such as key links (important sections), optional links (reference materials available on the Internet), multimedia components, pre-recorded video lecture clips and so forth.
2. Small multimedia learning objects Small chunks of multimedia learning objects are widely used in the study units to demonstrate processes and to illustrate abstract content.

3. Interactivity

Interactivity is the key to a quality e-learning experience. We provide four types of interactions in the learning process, including learner-content, learner-instructor, learner-learner, and learner-interface.

4. Collaboration

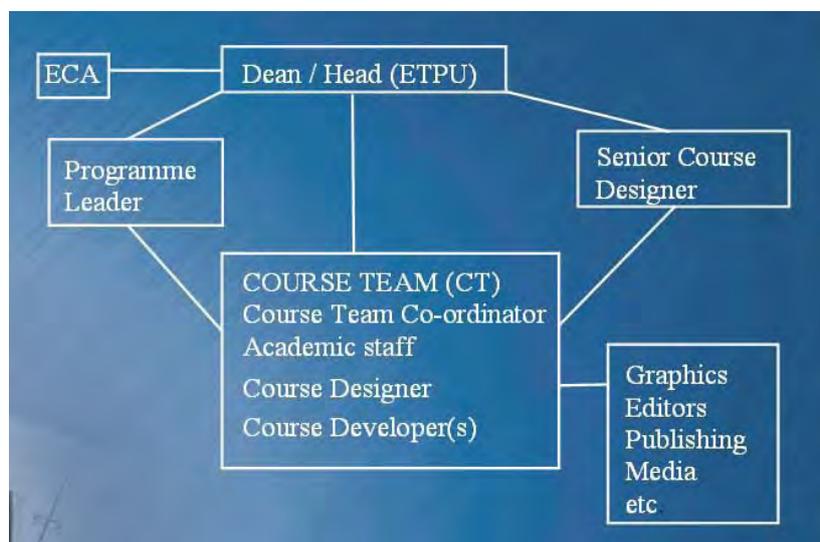
A productive learning process often involves collaboration among learners working together. Learners are provided with the opportunities to share ideas in groups, in collaborative learning activities and in discussion of assignments.

### ***Description of the Practice***

As Caplan (2004, p. 186) puts it, ‘Quality courseware production requires a highly organized, concerted effort from many players.’ The OUHK takes a course team approach to the development of materials (see *Figure 2*). A group of external scholars and legal professionals are recruited as course developers to write the materials under the guidance of a team of internal subject experts and an instructional designer, with the latter providing appropriate educational advice and input to the course, and often acting as a project manager. At the start of the course development project, the course developers are briefed on how to write the materials from an online perspective and on the integration of interactive activities, web links and discussion opportunities. The materials developed are monitored and refined by all the course team members to ensure a high level of factual accuracy, up-to-date information and sound instructional design. The team also makes sure that a balance of arguments is presented, backed up by appropriate references and case studies.

*CS 6.7 The course development process incorporates a range of relevant expertise (PIs: 6.7.1, 6.7.2).*

When the course team is satisfied with the materials, they are circulated internally to the Senior Course Designer, the Head of Educational Technology and Publishing, and the Dean of the relevant School. They are also sent to an External Course Assessor (ECA) for review — usually a professor from another local university. This ensures that the level, scope and quality are on a par with courses offered by other Hong Kong universities. Each of the above parties has two weeks to respond with any comments or revisions to the course materials.



**Figure 2 Course Development Team in relation to its supervisors**

## Adaptation to an online environment

Up to this point, the development procedure has been almost identical to that of a print-based distance learning course. From this point onwards, however, the adaptation process begins which will transform the course from words on paper to an interactive, multimedia learning environment. The text of the study units is first edited for language and house style by the in-house editor. The course designer then decides on how the various sections of the unit will be presented online. Important sections are presented as 'Key links', while background information is included as 'Optional links'. Some topics are selected for explanation by the course coordinator as a short video presentation, and the video scripts are written and recording arranged. Other topics are better presented in PowerPoint form with a voiceover explanation of the concept. The software Articulate is used to produce these PowerPoint presentations, and this has proved to be an effective and inexpensive means of presenting material. Some ideas are best explained in diagrammatic form, and Flash is used to produce animated figures which lead students step by step through difficult concepts. Flash is also used in some interactive activities such as drag-and-drop self-tests, and to produce short presentations to illustrate processes. *Figure 3* shows a webpage of the *B843W* course.

*CS 6.9 Course design uses appropriate technology to engage and support learners and to provide communication facilities (PIs: 6.9.1, 6.9.2, 6.9.3).*



**Figure 3** The interface of the multimedia rich learning content

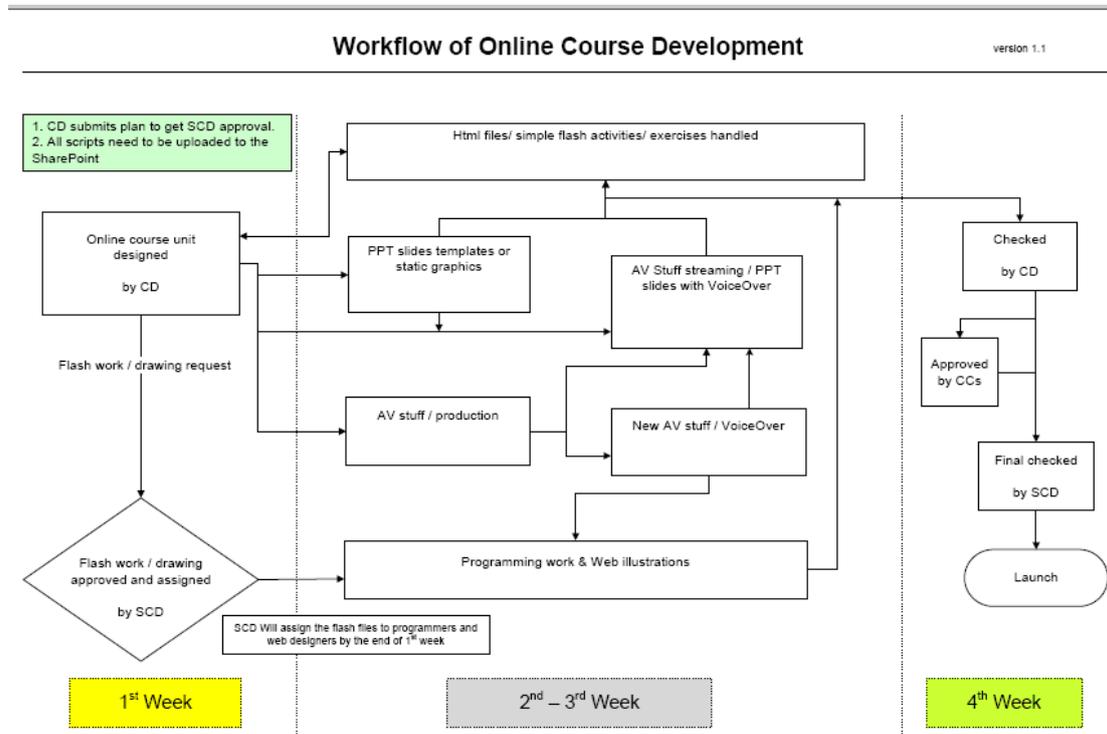
## Resources

Production of all these multimedia components takes a lot of human resources. We currently have a team of 2 programmers, 2 Web designers, 4 technicians, a graphic designer and an assistant media coordinator involved in the production of the videos, PowerPoint presentations and Flash work for the Master of Laws programme,

*CS 6.12 Appropriate personnel and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of course materials and their production processes (PIs: 6.12.2, 6.12.3).*

while two typists are responsible for the uploading of the study units themselves, including the layout and management of the links.

Clearly, with so many staff involved in the production of the courseware, and so many stages in the development process, proper coordination of the workflow is essential. A workflow system has been devised to facilitate this process (see *Figure 4*).



**Figure 4 Workflow of online course development**

This workflow system begins at the point at which the transformation of the edited unit to online mode takes place. As an extra measure of quality control, the course designer must submit his or her plan for the online components to the senior course designer for approval before the components are prepared. After the preparation of the online components and the uploading of the units, there is another checking stage by the course designer, which includes ensuring that all hyperlinks are active. The finalized unit is then re-checked by the course coordinator, and triple-checked by the senior course designer before it is launched. This three-layer process appears redundant, but it is vital in minimizing the risk of quality failure and ensures that the materials students access online have already been tried and tested multiple times.

The focal point of the workflow system is the use of Microsoft’s Sharepoint application. A Sharepoint site is set up for each online course, and every member of the production team has access to it. All instructions for uploading the online units and creating the multimedia components are uploaded to the Sharepoint site in Word and PowerPoint files by the course designer. Members of the multimedia team then download the parts they need for their share of the work.

## *Impact and outcomes*

The impact of introducing a systematic workflow scheme to the complicated process of producing online units has been positive. As schedules are often very tight and a number of online courses are being produced at the same time, the workflow system has ensured that each member of the team has a clear understanding of when his or her part is to be performed on a week-by-week basis. It also means that the course designer as the coordinator of the project is aware of the progress of each component. An important adjustment to the workflow system which has made this possible has been the addition of a named contact person for each stage of production. As the multimedia production work is allocated by the senior course designer but followed up by the course designer, there was some initial uncertainty as to who exactly was working on what. This has been overcome by the seemingly minor but significant step of incorporating a contact person, allowing easy follow-up of the progress of each learning object.

*CS 2.10 The production and delivery of course materials are timely, relevant and quality assured.*

Production of an online course after the content is ready usually takes four weeks. In practice, sticking rigidly to a four-week workflow scheme is not always possible: staff members may go on leave, there may be delays in the previous stages of course development, or other unforeseen circumstances may occur. It is important, therefore, to incorporate some leeway and flexibility into the process. The workflow system is there to support and guide the online course development process, not to restrict it. There, it is preferable if the four-week schedule is set at least a couple of weeks before the actual date when students need the materials.

### *Building quality into course development*

Gunawardena (2001) is of the view that the process of course development is an important variable for evaluating an online learning environment. Such a process includes information about how the course is designed, what tools are used, how learning is supported, how needs are assessed, and what kinds of interactions are planned to occur. Meyer (2002) concurred with the view that process measure is important and it is also one of the quality indicators. She indicated that hallmarks of a quality online course are the ample opportunities for interaction between and among faculty, students and the course materials. It is important for designers and developers to have “a sharper understanding of the role of instructional design and its application to the students and materials presented.” (p. 95). At the OUHK, we have built in three levels of quality assurance measures in our course development process.

There are different working teams engaged in the review and checking process to ensure quality at the levels of the course development process. At the first level, all course team members (academic staff, course developers and instructional designer) are involved in the discussion and finalizing of the instructional plan for each study unit, which includes setting learning outcomes for each unit or module, detailing online learning materials, video presentations, readings, learning activities, real-time tutorials, and so forth. At the second level, all internal staff members involved in the production process are required to review and check the developed materials. These people include editors, web designers, programmers, technicians, typists and instructional designers. The editors are responsible for copy editing and copyright clearance and at the same time they will review the organization, sequencing and navigation of the online materials. The web designers have to handle issues of web design, layout, usability and accessibility of the course materials. The programmers undertake the related programming work, and will also ensure that the technical issues of the

online components e.g. speed of access, networking, security, etc are well looked after. The technicians undertake the work of audio and video production. The typists check all interactive elements perform as required and the links are all active. The instructional designers oversee all the development issues and ensure the quality of the work. At the third level, peer review on the developed materials is conducted. Another instructional designer and typist with their pairs of fresh eyes for the materials are assigned to check the overall organization and multimedia arrangement. Finally, the course team members are required to go through the complete online version of the course to check the content, organization and presentation of text and multimedia components of the course. We have thus acted as what Kidney *et al* (2007) have indicated, that quality assurance of e-learning course development is exercised through various groups of people involved in the development process.

### ***Requirements for Adoption and Adaptation***

According to Koumi (1995), building quality into a course is preferable to the more negative approach of inspecting bad quality out. At the OUHK we do both. Adopting the course team approach, every opportunity is taken from the outset to integrate materials which are instructionally sound, up-to-date and academically rich. The materials are also checked multiple times by staff at different levels to ensure their quality. The final line of defense, of course, is the students, and their feedback is taken seriously in making improvements for subsequent presentations of the course.

The message of this case study is that it is not only the quality of the courseware that is important but the quality of the process behind its production. Implementation of a methodical and efficient workflow system ensures that schedules are adhered to and ultimately that course units are ready to access when students need them. As the OUHK moves ahead and expands its range of online course offerings, we will continue to monitor and improve upon the online course development process.

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## Case Study – 7

### MEETING NATIONAL MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT NEEDS THROUGH ODL AT THE MAURITIUS COLLEGE OF THE AIR

*Kailash Allgoo*

#### ***Editor's note:***

*This case study relates to the actions taken by the Mauritius College of the Air to meet the national manpower requirements of the country through the offer of high quality distance education programmes in partnership with the government and other national and international education providers. The good practice described relates mainly to Criterion 7- Learner Support and Progression, but also includes Criterion 1 – Mission, Vision and Planning; Criterion 2 – Management, Organisational Culture and Leadership; Criterion 5 – Programme Design and Development; and Criterion 6 – Course Design and Development in Standards and Performance Indicators of Distance Higher Education Institutions in Section 2. Criteria Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicators (PIs) are given in Parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***The Institutional Context***

Higher Education in Mauritius is characterized by a wide range of institutions with diverse characteristics which provide different levels of higher education in a range of disciplines. A number of overseas institutions also contribute to the provision of Higher Education in Mauritius through the distance education mode.

The Mauritius College of the Air (MCA) was established under the Mauritius College of the Air Act in 1971 as an organisation under the Ministry of Education. This was a major step towards building the Distance Learning capacity of Mauritius. However, this development moved rather slowly for the first 10 – 15 years of activity.

The MCA was re-enacted in 1985 to provide for the merger of the Audio-Visual Centre of the Ministry of Education and to allow extension of its scope of activities.

Under this new mandate, the MCA became responsible for the execution and implementation of **“promotional activities in the areas of education, arts, science and culture generally, and the methods to carry out this mission as through mass media and distance learning.”** (MCA Strategic Plan, 2004-2007)

Located at the academic zone of Reduit, the MCA benefits from its strategic positioning in sustaining collaboration and affiliation with other key actors in the Higher Education sector – namely the University of Mauritius (UOM), the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate (MES) and the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) – also situated within the same knowledge hub.

In 1995, the premises of the MCA were extended to accommodate necessary infrastructure for distance education (DE). This corporate development was made possible by Government

assistance and a loan funded by the African Development Bank. The endeavour testifies that the practice of delivering DE at the MCA is in line with national as well as regional objectives. Moreover, the MCA adheres to the Regulatory Framework for Post-secondary Education set up by the Tertiary Education Commission and collaborates closely with the TEC's Distance Education & Open Learning and Quality Assurance & Accreditation Division.

The vision of the present Mauritian government, as stated in the *National Policy Framework for the Setting up of Tertiary Educational Institutions in Mauritius* (2006), is to position Mauritius **“as a key player and a knowledge hub in the region”**. The Government Budget Speech 2008 - 09 includes concrete financial plans for **“delivering education at a click of a mouse”**, which included a Government loan guarantee scheme to cover costs of laptops and Internet access for students and support the forthcoming **“strategy to implement the development of Distance Education in Mauritius”** to be formulated by the Ministry of Education, Culture & Human Resources.

### ***Development of the Practice***

The Educational Master Plan for the Year 2000, published by the Ministry of Education in 1991, foresaw that “Distance Education materials and methods will be increasingly used in regular courses. The MCA will become a major facilitator in this area.” The Plan helped greatly in accelerating the development of DE at the MCA, and in January 1995 the DE Division of the MCA was set up in order to deliver distance learning courses, mainly with the aim of promoting continuous and lifelong learning in line with the recommendations of the Salaries Commission in 1989, which advocated the professional development of civil servants through distance and lifelong learning. The same objective is still relevant, since the Pay Research Bureau Report published in May 2008 reiterates the need for staff development to create:

**“A pertinent human resource challenge of a modern and responsive Civil Service.”**

The objectives of the division of DE at its creation were:

- To develop institutional capacity for the delivery of DE programmes
- To offer adult and continuing education using DE methodology
- To cater for the needs of those willing to gain access to education after having left the conventional system.

*CS 1.1 The institution has a stated vision and mission that is supported by specific and clearly defined goals and objectives within the context of national development priorities and the latest international trends in education (PIs: 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.4).*

Although DE programmes offered at the MCA cater for academic as well as personal development, the focus is mainly on professional upgrading. Courses are not publicly funded.

In 2006 – 07 the Division of Distance Education offered a total of 18 award and non-award programmes and courses at different levels to 938 students from both Mauritius and its dependent island Rodrigues. The majority of students enrolled in Distance Learning courses are either in fulltime employment or engaged in higher studies as mature students, several years after having completed secondary education.

In May 2005, the Open University of Mauritius, which incorporates the MCA, was enacted. Though the act has not been implemented as yet, it restates the function and role of the MCA as the catalyst for Distance Higher Learning in Mauritius.

All Distance Higher Education Programmes offered at the MCA are recognized by the Tertiary Education Commission. Most of these courses are offered in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). The MCA reviews its agreement with IGNOU on a regular basis, the latest review of agreement having been undertaken in August 2005. IGNOU is also the awarding body for its courses offered at the MCA.

*CS 1.21 When the institution contracts to another agency, in part or full, the educational services of a distance learning programme, it takes steps to ensure the academic quality and integrity of all educational services offered in its name (PI: 1.21.2)*

As the MCA is not an awarding body, it relies heavily upon its collaboration with the University of Mauritius and the University of Technology, Mauritius (UTM) for the development of award-bearing courses not offered by IGNOU yet deemed essential for the country's manpower development. In June 2006, the MCA signed an agreement with UOM to provide the MSc in Risk Management through ODL, along with two other part-time courses. 90 students enrolled in the MCA / UOM programmes in 2006/7. This initiative was followed by a Memorandum of Agreement signed between the MCA and the Ministry of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms to provide training to public servants in customer care and quality management through ODL mode. These programmes do not lead to higher education awards. Three other courses are under development with the Ministry of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms, including a BSc Hons Management Top-Up Programme, which is very likely to be delivered in ODL mode in collaboration with the UTM.

*CS 2.27 The institution encourages collaborative relationship for its activities (PI: 2.27.1).*

### ***Description of the Practice***

The features of DE provision through the MCA have been designed to ensure the quality of the learning experience.

The core activities of the Division of Distance Education of the MCA are:

- Course / Programme Development
- Instructional Systems Design
- Course / Programme Delivery
- Course / Programme Administration / Management
- Prospecting for new courses / programmes
- Training of Tutors

IGNOU provides the content, structure and materials for its courses run in collaboration with MCA, while the MCA is mainly responsible for the provision of regular face-to-face tutorials and for the marking of assignments. The self-instructional materials are meant to facilitate independent study and are normally given out to students at the induction session. Course content is reviewed by the MCA to assess its suitability within the Mauritian context.

Responsibilities taken up by the MCA towards students enrolling in Distance Higher Studies at the institution are:

- Organisation of Induction sessions
- Design of a programme planner to establish a timetable for study
- Planning of course delivery system
- Provision of a personal tutor for every student
- Phone Counseling
- Pre-exam Counseling
- Pastoral Care
- Individual coaching through comments and feedback on assignments
- Institutional / Administrative Support

*CS 2.2 The institution has a realistic academic calendar that is followed meticulously (PI: 2.2.1).*

*CS 7.8 There are mechanisms to follow up and support learners throughout the duration of their study*

For courses offered jointly with UOM and UTM, learning materials are prepared by both institutions, with responsibilities clearly defined in a memorandum of understanding.

Entry requirements, admission criteria, fees and duration vary with the nature of the programme, depending upon the following:

- Level of course / programme
- Award or non-award course / programme
- Accrediting institution

*CS 5.7 Access to the programme is as open as possible with flexible entry and exit points where applicable*

The MCA does not have the autonomy to become a fully open-access institution because at times its partner institutions set rigid admission criteria. Nevertheless the College does recognize work experience and prior learning when enrolling students on certain courses. In the absence of set criteria, pre-enrolment counseling / interview is carried out to determine the ability of the student to complete the course. Under these circumstances, the students take total responsibility for their learning after having been briefed about the requirements of the course and the implications of DE.

*CS 5.8 The programmes provide information for learners which includes a description of the aims, objectives and learning outcomes, target groups, teaching-learning processes, means of delivery, support services, scheme of assessment, credit and time requirements (PIs: 5.8.2, 5.8.3).*

The MCA provides potential and enrolling students with a flyer detailing aims and objectives of the programme, entry requirements, duration, assessment modes and weighting, delivery modes, programme structure and fees. In addition, IGNOU provides a programme prospectus with detailed course content and structure.

Learner support is provided by the MCA in the form of:

- Study skills
- Writing skills
- One-to-one as well as group counseling sessions
- Monitoring of assignment traffic
- Monitoring of Student Progress
- Additional printed material for reference
- A study centre
- Photocopying facilities
- Computer facilities
- Free Internet Access
- Model Answers to Term Assessments

*CS 7.2 Learner support is provided using a range of media including appropriate ICTs (PIs: 7.2.1, 7.2.2).*

Every course team normally comprises a co-coordinator (course leader), course authors, an instructional designer, an editor and a media producer. The co-coordinator is a full-time staff member of the MCA, whereas tutors are usually part-timers from UOM, UTM or the private sector who have been trained at the MCA to support learning in DE context.

*CS 6.7 The course development process incorporates a range of relevant expertise (PI: 6.7.1).*

Self-evaluation for improvement of practices and services is a regular feature at the MCA. After completion of each DE module students are requested to fill in an Evaluation Questionnaire, following which a report is prepared and follow-up / remedial actions are initiated.

*CS 5.13 Learner satisfaction relative to the quality of education and training provided in the programmes is regularly evaluated*

## ***Resources***

The MCA benefits from a government recurrent grant, which amounted to Rs. 66,000,000 (sixty six million Mauritian rupees) for the financial year 2004 – 05 and Rs. 63,000,000 (sixty three million Mauritian rupees) for the financial year 2005 - 06.

The DE division of the MCA presently has two classrooms, each equipped with 20 computer terminals, on its premises in Reduit. However, two more classrooms with 30 computer terminals each have been allocated for face-to-face tutorials at the MCA Study Centre located within the compounds of Belle Rose State Secondary School. DE students benefit from free access to the Internet on these computers.

Print is the major medium for dispensing DE course material at the MCA. In fact, the printing department is ISO 9001:2000 certified and is subject to regular external auditing.

Presently, the National Resource Centre is part of the Media Division of the MCA and acts both as audio-visual library and academic library for DE.

## ***Impact and Outcomes***

The MCA is striving to sustain the national strategy for transforming Mauritius into a Knowledge Hub and a Centre of Higher Learning for the region. The contribution level of the MCA to Higher Education in Mauritius is shown in Fig.1.

The MCA adheres to its mission, as well as the objectives established by TEC, in providing quality Distance Education. However, the institution experiences a level of frustration because the legislative framework in which it operates does not allow it to make awards for the programmes that it offers. It feels that the advancement of the institution as well as the development of DE in Mauritius would be enhanced if the MCA were empowered as an awarding body for the programmes it provides.

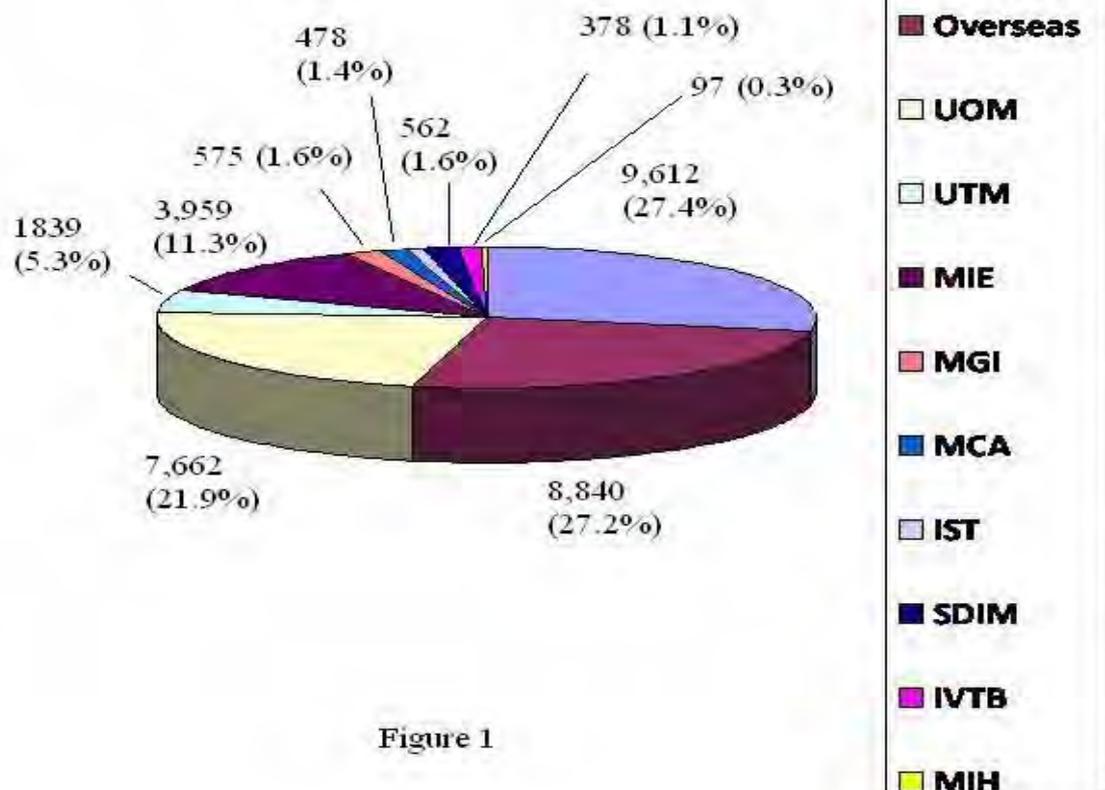


Figure 1

### *Requirements for adoption and adaptation*

Strategic Planning at the MCA is based on a four-phased approach:

- Sectional discussion
- Specialized inputs
- Harmonisation
- Selection of performance indicators.

The present Strategic Plan (2004-2007) identifies “**the need for quality rather than quantity [...] This is a strategic choice which has led to considerable implications since improved quality requires more time being given to non tangibles such as conception, planning and assessment for which human resources are required.**”

The focus on quality is enshrined in the institutional policy objectives:

- To work towards equity in education
- To support teaching and learning
- To promote adult and continuing education
- To improve the quality of out-of-school education.

The strategic objectives identified during the drafting of the Strategic Plan form the basis of proposed policy initiatives under consideration in consultation with TEC and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources. The DE Division also ensures that the programmes it offers are in accordance with the list of Priority Fields of Study established by the ministry. In this way it is possible for the MCA to develop its programmes in line with the national policy requirements.

## ***7. Abbreviations***

DE	Distance Education
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
MCA	Mauritius College of the Air
MES	Mauritius Examinations Syndicate
MIE	Mauritius Institute of Education
ODL	Open Distance Learning
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
UOM	University of Mauritius
UTM	University of Technology, Mauritius



## Case Study – 8

### LEARNER SUPPORT AND PROGRESSION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, JAMAICA

*Jeannette M. Bartley,*

#### ***Editor's Note***

*This case study relates the experiences of the Continuing Education, Open and Distance Learning Office UTech, Jamaica, in providing quality learner support services to remote learners by developing and implementing the Distance Learner Framework. The good practices in the case study are reflected through the Performance Standards and Indicators in Criterion 4 – Human Resource Development; Criterion 5- Programme Design and Development; Criterion 6 – Course Design and Development; Criterion 7 – Learner Support and Progression, in Standards and Performance Indicators of Distance Higher Education Institutions in Section 2. Criteria Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicators (PIs) are given in parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***Institutional Context***

The University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech), one of the leading polytechnic universities of the English-speaking Caribbean, has a population of over ten thousand students. UTech is a government-funded institution, established in 1958, to meet the human resource, technical and socio-economic development needs of Jamaica and the region. It was accorded University status in 1995, and is registered with the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ). More than 90% undergraduate programmes are accredited.

The Continuing Education, Open and Distance Learning Office (CEODL) has the mandate to diversify learning opportunities in the university through flexible access and delivery modes, with emphasis on customized programming and the innovative use of educational technology for blended learning approaches. UTech-CEODL has offered several certificate and diploma programmes to over one hundred and fifteen students in other Caribbean countries including the Bahamas, St. Kitts and Nevis, Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The distance delivery modes included print, CD-ROMs and online learning formats.

#### ***The Development of the Practice***

With an increasing thrust by UTech into the Caribbean, the proposed practice of Distance Learner Support and Progression is being developed within a broader context of the emerging institutional policy framework and standard operating procedures for distance education. These strategic initiatives are being refined by the experiences garnered from existing continuing education projects with partnering Caribbean countries and are subject to the accreditation policy requirements of the University.

The provision for UTech distance learners includes a diverse range of support services designed to facilitate their academic, administrative and technical success; and the use of various forms of technology for tutoring, mentoring, counseling and peer support to facilitate their holistic progression. The overarching aim is to ensure that the quality of the remote support services are equivalent to or exceed that of the home-campus through the application of similar quality assurance mechanisms for diagnosis, monitoring and evaluation at various stages of programme delivery.

### ***Description of the Practice***

The current UTech distance learner support framework includes the following elements of good practice, identifies in the COL performance indicators:

#### **1. Learner-Centered Design of Materials, Learning Activities and Use of Technology**

1.1. A blended learning or hybrid approach utilizing a combination of primarily online ( $\geq 75\%$  of the course) with print media and face-to-face sessions to accommodate diverse learning styles, and mitigate the physical-psychological sense of distance;

*CS 6.2 Course design takes into consideration and incorporates recent advances in ICT. (PIs: 6.2.1 . 6.2.2)*

1.2. A course schedule/calendar with dates/duration of sessions and assigned credits, highlighting the recommended ‘time-on-task online’, with mandatory participation in the online and face-to-face sessions;

*CS 6.10 A complete instructional package includes course description, syllabus, course plans, learning outcomes, details of assessments and evaluations, completion requirements, course material including multimedia supplementary learning resources, interactive course activities, community building activities and assessments, texts and media, materials and information to demonstrate the appropriate scope, sequence and depth*

1.3. A Distance Learner Guide or Handbook with the following items:

- List of minimum specifications for technology, ICT competencies and comfort levels;
- Outline of programme goals/objectives, structure and design considerations, module description, assessment requirements, code of conduct, operational structure and other institutional information;
- Description of academic, technical and administrative support services with duties of specific personnel within UTech and the local country region, and a list of primary contact persons with telephone numbers and email addresses;
- Checklist of Effective Study Tips for the Distance Learner;

*CS 7.7 Academic, administrative and technical staff facilitate learner success. (PIs: 7.7.1 , 7.7.2 , 7.7.3)*

1.4. A range of interactive course material designs and formats including text, graphics, visual and audio files; and diverse learning activities including individual presentations and reflective learning portfolios to cater for individual learning styles and independent learning;

*CS 7.2 Learner support is provided using a range of media including appropriate ICTs (PI: 7.2.1)*

1.5. Diverse peer support mechanisms including group discussions, team reviews, peer critiques and other

*CS 7.11 Opportunities are provided for academic and social peer interaction. (PI: 7.11.1)*

collaborative and interactive learning activities for both online and face-to-face sessions;

1.6. Access to UTech online library databases e.g. WilsonWeb and EBSCO Host to provide additional reading material for learners;

1.7. Learner support for progression within courses reflected by the interconnection and sequencing of modules;

1.8. Learner support for progression across courses through consideration of continuing education and professional development modules for advanced credit, bridging modules towards related or higher level courses, lobby for recognition/promotion especially with partnering employers or government-sponsors;

*CS 7.14 The institution has mechanisms to facilitate student progression from one level of education to the next higher level successfully and towards gainful employment.*

1.9. Access to learner support and guidance provided through a range of media options including emails, list serv, telephone, fax, print, online FAQs, and in-person consultations with academic/administrative teams indicating pre-established times for telephone contact/virtual office hours;

*CS 7.5 Learners have access to the tutors through a variety of media and locations.*

1.10. Practical/hands-on orientation sessions with pertinent staff representatives (academic/administrative/technical) to guide individual/collective learner support for technology-mediated learning and communication;

1.11. All distance learners required to complete a pre-course learner needs assessment and learner profile including:

- Biographical details, educational background, work experiences in field of study,
- Prior learning experiences, learning goals & expectations, professional development needs, learning competencies, skills, aptitudes
- ICT skills, access to learning resources.

*CS 5.4 Programmes are designed and developed taking into consideration the learners' needs and the resources available to them. (PIs: 5.4.1 , 5.4.2)*

## 2. Academic Support (instructors/facilitators/tutors/advisors) for Learners

2.1. Instructors/facilitators/tutors/advisors carefully selected by criteria (qualifications, experience), consistent with the standards of the University's quality assurance and accreditation policies, as appropriate for the distance learning environment;

*CS 7.3 Tutors are selected and trained for their roles as facilitators of learning. (PIs: 7.3.1 , 7.3.3)*

2.2. Instructors/facilitators/tutors/advisors for UTech-supported distance learning courses required to complete pre-course assessment surveys/interviews and participate in orientation sessions and review meetings with the CEODL Office, to satisfy the competency and comfort level requirements for teaching at a distance;

2.3. Team approach to programme coordination and instructional/tutoring/advising support for learners to facilitate adequate tutor/learner ratio for problem solving and monitoring learner progress to completion;

*CS 7.4 Tutorial group size allows for support to be provided to learners in various ways (PI: 7.4.1)*

2.4. Provision of faculty teams of distance learning moderators/assessors to validate/standardize learning outcomes within specified time frame, consistent with the wider University quality assurance processes;

2.5. Performance of instructors/facilitators/tutors/advisors monitored through various mechanisms including informal feedback from students and local country resource coordinators; formal student evaluations; faculty team evaluations, interactions with staff and management, as appropriate;

*CS 7.12 Measures for feedback and monitoring of learner support services are in place. (PI: 7.12.1)*

2.6. Good performance of instructors/ facilitators/tutors/ advisors on course-project assignments currently rewarded by compensation for added workload. Consideration being given to award continuing professional development units or academic credits and incentive points towards promotion and tenure;

*CS 4.5 Quality of performance is recognized for selection and promotion of all categories of staff. (PI: 4.5.4)*

2.7. Provision for continuous quality improvement of instructional and tutorial support services to learners through ongoing training and development initiatives for academic and administrative staff.

*CS 4.6 There is an effective human resource development system to train, retain and motivate the employees for the roles and tasks they perform, particularly with respect to the application of appropriate new*

## 3. Administrative and Technical Support for Learners

3.1. Provision of an In-Country Coordinator as a local advisor and resource expert with familiarity of the overall programme content, methodology and delivery mode, to facilitate learner access to local resource personnel/systems, and regular communication with learners towards completion of programme requirements;

*CS 7.7 Academic, administrative and technical staff facilitate learner success. (PIs: 7.7.1 , 7.7.2 ,*

- 3.2. Access to country coordinator and UTech multi-skilled learner support personnel via Integrated Help Desk facility provided through various modes (telephone, appointment, e-mail, on-line discussion, video-conferencing), with progressive response levels and contact acknowledged within 24-hours and special consideration for timely feedback to learners at risk;
- 3.3. Arrangements with local tertiary institutions or government agencies to provide access to library systems, physical space, technical expertise, monitoring systems and personnel to support learners, especially with requirements for practical experiences;
- 3.4. Provision of an online learning management system (Moodle Open Source) with tracking mechanism for monitoring procedures and timeframe to receive, record, process and return assignments to facilitate formative feedback to learners;
 

<p><i>CS 7.6 The turnaround of assignments ensures timely feedback</i> (PIs: 7.6.1 , 7.6.2)</p>
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- 3.5. Regular and systematic monitoring of processes and workflow by UTech-CEODL to ensure timely feedback, interventions for completion of programme targets, improving retention rates and overall empowerment of staff towards learner-centered services;
- 3.6. Performance of administrative/technical support systems monitored through various mechanisms including informal feedback from students and country-coordinators; formal student evaluations; faculty team evaluations, interactions with staff and management;
- 3.7. Provision for continuous quality improvement of administrative/technical support services through ongoing training and development initiatives for staff and appropriate mitigation strategies towards learner-centered emphasis.
 

<p><i>CS 4.3 Sufficient, qualified technical and support staff are employed to meet the institution's objectives for student learning.</i> (PI: 4.3.3)</p>
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## ***The Resources***

The coordination of Distance Learner Support Services & Resources is facilitated by UTech-CEODL through a cross-functional network of academic, administrative and technical work-teams who depend primarily on ICT communication tools within a virtual space to support remote learners. The current physical infrastructure comprises small offices for the Faculty, Library and central administration, but with appropriate technology equipment (hardware/software), adequate bandwidth and telephone connectivity to maintain the reach to learners across the Caribbean.

The human resource dimension includes appropriately trained personnel who understand the customer-service requirements for technology-mediated academic delivery and effective administrative oversight across distances. Cross-functional team meetings, review sessions and periodic reports to institutional partners and sponsors are integral to the quality monitoring process. Of significance is the integrated help desk team working with the in-country coordinator and course instructors to troubleshoot all academic, administrative and technical problems communicated by learners.

UTech currently allocates core funding for basic physical and capital infrastructure, administrative staffing and other recurrent expenditures. The University has also benefitted greatly from regional/international sponsorship of technology resources and cross-functional training and development of human resources. However, recovery of variable costs for learning support activities and other distance learning operations is primarily derived from programme/project income.

### ***The Impact/Outcomes***

The consistent focus on Learner Support and Progression has facilitated ongoing quality audits for more comprehensive planning and central budgetary allocation. A review of the student evaluation data submitted for two recent distance learning offerings has revealed the following trends:

Learner Support strengths (positive ratings from 80-100% participants) include:

- clear course requirements and grading processes;
- well organized content;
- appropriate learning experiences;
- coverage of course syllabus;
- knowledgeable instructors;
- valuable and timely feedback;
- effective technology-use for interaction with instructors and peers;
- high comfort levels with online-blended learning experience;
- timely response to technical difficulties; and
- integrated support services.

Learner Support challenges that were mitigated include:

- Limited access to computers - addressed by the provision of a dedicated facility by the government-sponsoring agency;
- Limited access to bandwidth for remote learners - addressed by special arrangements for dedicated T1 lines to partnering educational centres;
- The relatively steep online learning curve for participants - alleviated by restructuring the pace of the course and increasing motivational strategies;
- The lack of required computer skills by most participants (60-80%), despite positive self-reports on Online Learner Profiles - addressed by additional tutorials by the sponsoring agency

The recommended areas for continuous quality improvement include:

- More intensive processes for verifying the technical competencies of participants with pre-course readiness tests and hands-on orientation sessions
- Creation of a central or devolved fund for proactive consolidation of distance learner support services, beyond current project initiatives.
- Provision of appropriate support, services and facilities for learners with special needs

## ***Requirements for Adoption and Adaptation***

The academic collaboration model which guides the development of the learner-centered support and progression practice at a distance, is facilitated through a centralized office at the core to provide policy support, training, co-ordination, administration support and consultancy services. In this model, the UTech-CEODL Office liaises with Faculties and other central support units, to facilitate continuous reflection and improvement to meet the broader institutional quality assurance requirements and international accreditation standards.

General oversight and guidance on policy decisions and academic/administrative/technical delivery requirements for quality assurance are provided by a Programme Steering or Project Advisory Committee, which reports to the Deputy President. The committee includes managerial representation from the Faculty, CEODL Office, Office of Curriculum Development and Evaluation (OCDE), Library, Registrar's Office, Student Services, and Technology Information Management (TIM) department.

The collaboration between the internal UTech support units and partnering institutions/international agencies is significant in providing dedicated facilities and connectivity for remote access by distance learners and local resource facilitators to the UTech learning management system, a virtual library facility including electronic databases and journals, online student kiosk, course WebPages and all other UTech website links. Of note are the experiential learning approaches with online readiness test and hands-on orientation sessions to verify the technology competencies of learners; inclusion of students' perspectives in the planning process and continuous feedback loops.

A comprehensive institutional/centralized budget is being developed for the forthcoming academic years 2009-2011 to consolidate and expand the UTech Distance Learning portfolio, funds will be earmarked for Learner Support to upgrade the technology infrastructure, providing a 24-hour virtual help desk and expanding online access to select degree programmes, through modularization and semesterization.

Ultimately, successful adoption and adaptation of the practice would depend on systematic quality audits and support from senior management and all stakeholders for continuous quality improvement.

## ***Acronyms***

CEODL	The Continuing Education, Open and Distance Learning Office
OCDE	The Office of Curriculum Development and Evaluation
UCJ	The University Council of Jamaica
UTech	The University of Technology, Jamaica



## Case Study – 9

### THE USE OF MOBILE PHONE TECHNOLOGY IN STUDENT SUPPORT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

*Johan Hendrikz*

#### ***Editor's Note***

*This case study illustrates how the Unit for Distance Education in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria is using mobile phones to enhance the quality of learner support. The good practices adopted are reflected in Criterion 3 – the Learners; Criterion 7 - Learner Support and Progression; and Criterion 10 – Research, Consultancy and Extension Services of the Standards and Performance Indicators for Distance Higher Education Institutions in Section 2. Criteria Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicators (PIs) are given in parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***The Institutional Context***

The University of Pretoria (UP) was established in 1908 and, with its more than 51 000 students, it is the most comprehensive residential and research University in South Africa. Its Faculty of Education is the largest face-to-face faculty of its kind in the country.

The Unit for Distance Education was established in the Faculty of Education in 2002. The Unit offers two undergraduate programmes and one postgraduate programme for teachers who want to upgrade their qualifications. In 2008 more than 19 000 teachers were enrolled in these programmes.

Given the realities of Africa and the lack of access to the Internet, these programmes are predominantly delivered through paper-based learning materials with face-to-face contact sessions. The programmes were specifically developed to suit the needs of teachers in rural communities in Africa. Since inception in 2002, more than 9 000 teachers have graduated from these programmes.

#### ***Development of the Practice***

The availability of mobile phones and the access of our students to such phones prompted the Unit for Distance Education to embark on a comprehensive project to optimise the possibilities of text messaging (SMSs) to enhance the quality of administrative and academic support to our students. When the Unit started in 2002 it was established that more than 95% of the students had mobile phones, while fewer than 10% had access to or owned a computer and fewer than 1% had access to the Internet.

<p><i>CS 3.7 The Institution has mechanisms to maintain and monitor close links with learners (PI: 3.7.2)</i></p>
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In 2008, 99% of the students have mobile phones, as opposed to fewer than 3% who have Internet access and fewer than 43% who have access to or own a PC.

The Unit initially only used text messaging for basic administrative messages. Over the years this application has developed as an integral part of the communication strategy to students. Text messaging as a tool in learner support is integrated into the delivery of the programme to such an extent that it would be almost impossible to deliver the programme without this support and learners would be seriously disadvantaged if text message support were terminated.

*CS 7.8 There are mechanisms to follow up and support learners throughout the duration of their study.  
(PI: 7.8.1)*

### ***Description of the Practice***

There are basically three approaches that an institution can follow regarding the use of SMSs: a “push” approach, a “pull” approach and an interactive approach. They are not mutually exclusive and the boundaries between the approaches are sometimes blurred.

Towards the end of 2002, the Unit started to send general messages in bulk to students regarding due dates for submission of assignments, announcements regarding examinations and the despatch of their learning material (“push” approach). In 2003, discussions with the internal programmers of the mainframe computer started regarding the development of a programme to personalise SMSs in their materials dispatch programme. The challenge was to link the student number by default to a preset message, import the postal tracking number into the message and send it automatically via the system to the student. The full function has been in place and operational since the end of 2005.

*CS 7.1 Learner support is considered during programme development and is built into the design of the programme and course materials.*

Right from the start our position has been that the SMS support of students should be integrated into the systems and processes of the University. Using SMSs manually on an ad hoc basis is possible but not advisable.

We plan our SMS interventions carefully, develop the messages with great care, diarise the fixed SMSs in our year planner and budget properly for the expenses.

Staff members have over the years come to perceive SMSs as a very useful tool and have become highly creative in the use of SMSs because of the benefits that they experience in this way.

One needs to make sure that the general bulk SMSs are only a confirmation of what has already been communicated to students by other means. Whenever you communicate a new message or a message that the student must receive, telephone or written follow-up (depending on the time frame) is essential.

It is important to apply the basic communication principles in the construction of SMSs, for example identify the target group, analyse the essence of your message, be clear, use the right words and so on.

It is obvious that SMS messages can never replace letters or personal telephone calls. There are, however, instances where SMSs are the best way of communication. There is no more cost-effective way (excluding e-mail) to communicate with students.

It is quite clear from student feedback and the response after sending SMSs that students perceive this type of support as valuable and helpful and that they expect the University to use it.

One of the aspects that was dealt with carefully was the facility for students to use SMSs to communicate with the University. We were keenly aware that if we could not deal with the large-scale use of SMS messages from students we should not introduce this facility. We have decided to introduce a system to enable our students to send messages to us and we respond immediately ("pull approach").

The pilot project started in April 2006 and became fully operational in 2007 after we had established a proper technology infrastructure. This feature also made it possible to register students for tutorials and contact sessions via mobile phone.

The Unit for Distance Education was so encouraged by the positive response and feedback from students to the administrative SMSs that, early in 2004, it began to explore the possibility of using SMSs for academic purposes.

In the initial discussions in the Unit for Distance Education, possible SMS interventions were identified that included SMSs that could direct students to parts of their study guide to support them in the completion of assignments, send them a type of SMS quiz and introduce the use of IVR (interactive voice response).

*CS 7.8 There are mechanisms to follow up and support learners throughout the duration of their study.*

It was accepted that although the SMSs were academically orientated, this was not a learning and teaching tool in the true sense of the word – at least not initially. But it is a tool to support teaching and learning.

We took the position that if this tool can do the following, then it is a mechanism to support teaching and learning and its possibilities have at least to be explored:

- Direct students to important pages in the study guide.
- Create the perception that the University is supporting them with their learning.
- Create a perception that the lecturer is “closer” than the physical distance between learner and lecturer indicates.
- Give the student the opportunity to ask academic questions via SMS and to get a response.
- Listen to the lecturer giving a “mini-lecture” on a difficult concept.
- Motivate the student to work diligently.
- Help students to structure their studies.
- Make them feel they are not alone in their studies.

*CS 7.5 Learners have access to the tutors through a variety of media and locations.  
(PI: 7.5.1)*

In October 2005 the Unit launched the third pilot project for the use of SMSs for academic purposes. In the third pilot stage, the performance of the pilot group was evaluated against the performance of a control group.

The results of this research that ran over a period of 18 months, showed the following:

*CS 10.2 Findings of research underpin the development of the programmes and the courses of the institution (PI: 10.2.3)*

- There were no significant differences in the patterns of the examination results between the control and pilot group over the period of 18 months.
- There were no significant differences in the average grades of the students in the control group compared to the pilot group.
- The conclusion was that the SMS's didn't improve the academic performance of the pilot group, but rather encouraged completion. The percentage of students in the pilot group that finished the programme in the minimum period of time was significantly higher than in the control group.

<p><i>CS 7.15 Learner support systems target retention (PI: 7.15.1)</i></p>
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Given the encouraging results of the research the Unit is now systematically introducing “academic” SMS support into all of its programmes.

### ***The Resources***

In an environment where students have limited access to ICTs except for cell phones, SMSs become the most cost-effective way to communicate with students. It is obvious that there are limitations in SMS communication but for those messages that can be communicated via SMS, the advantages are numerous.

The University has negotiated a deal with a service provider for bulk SMSs. The cost of these SMSs is almost 50% lower than for normal SMSs. The cost of a letter is almost 400% higher than that of an SMS.

Furthermore, the impact on human resources is very limited. Once a message has been constructed, one person from his/her desktop computer will, within a minute or so, extract all the numbers of the receivers from the mainframe and send the message either directly to the students' mobile phones or to the service provider who will send it to the students. The software to perform this function was made available free of charge by the service provider.

The only development work for our SMS system was done by internal programmers, who wrote a programme for the mainframe to personalise bulk SMSs. If we had had to contract outside programmers to do this work, the cost would have been substantial.

The development of the technology infrastructure for the “academic” SMSs was a once-off cost intensive expenditure. Once this was in place no additional costs were needed to run the initiative.

### ***The Impact/Outcome***

The following examples give an indication of some of the positive outcomes in the use of SMSs:

- In response to a reminder for registration for contact sessions, 58% of the students registered before the closing date compared with the normal expected percentage of below 40%.
- In response to a reminder of the contact session dates, 95% of the learners who had registered attended the sessions.
- Learners respond en masse and almost immediately to information provided in SMS messages.

From a quality and financial point of view, the successes are also significant.

- Using print and the postal service to distribute the necessary information to learners would have been more than 20 times more expensive than bulk SMSs.
- While the SMSs provide immediate and JIT (just-in-time) information, the posted information would have taken between 3 and 18 days (depending on the remoteness of the learner) to reach all the learners.

The Unit for Distance Education evaluates the service delivery to students twice a year. The number of responses that we receive from students ranges between 3 000 and 4 000.

It is clear from student feedback and the response that we get after sending SMSs that students perceive this type of support as valuable and helpful and that they expect the University to use it.

*CS 7.12 Measures for feedback and monitoring of learner support services are in place.  
(PI: 7.12.1)*

### ***Requirements for Adoption and Adaptation***

It is the responsibility of institutions to identify and optimise the most appropriate mechanisms for student support within their context. There is no perfect student support instrument. All instruments that we use, be that the Internet, interactive television or radio, have their pros and cons.

The disadvantages of SMSs are the following:

- If the phone is switched off the service provider will after a certain time remove the message from the system.
- The student could have lost his/her phone.
- The student could have changed his/her number.
- The message was opened by a family member or friend and was not conveyed to the owner.
- The student just doesn't read the message.
- The message for some reason got lost in cyber space.
- The students do not know how to read an SMS. It happened in our case that students complained that they did not receive the full message but the problem was that they did not know how to scroll down.
- The message could be misunderstood by the student.

There are, however, also very positive benefits in the use of SMSs.

- It is immediate.
- It is received by a student as a personal message to him or her.
- It carries an image of authority and importance.
- Students tend to take the message seriously.
- If requested to do something, the experience is that the students react almost immediately.
- It is by far the cheapest way of communication.

There is a need for research on the role of mobile phones in teaching and learning, specifically in developing countries. Mobile phones will not replace the computer but do have further possibilities that need to be explored.

### ***Acronyms***

SMS            Short message system



## Case Study – 10

### **TECHNOLOGY FOR LEARNER SUPPORT: IMPLEMENTING A LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AT WAWASAN OPEN UNIVERSITY**

*Madhulika Kaushik*

#### ***Editor's note:***

*This case study relates to the use of a customised on-line learning management system built on the Moodle platform to improve access to learner support services at the Wawasan Open University, Malaysia. The good practice relates to Criterion 6 – Course Design and Development; Criterion 7 – Learner Support and Progression; Criterion 8 – Learner Assessment and Evaluation; and Criterion 9 – Learning Infrastructure and Resources in Standards and Performance Indicators of Distance Higher Education Institutions in Section 2. Criteria Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicators (PIs) are given in parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***The Institutional Context***

Wawasan Open University (WOU) is Malaysia's first charity-backed, private, not-for-profit university dedicated to adult learners. It is committed to the expansion of opportunities in higher education and excellence in teaching.

The University was officially launched on 22 Sept 2006, and opened the doors for its first intake on 22 Jan 2007, with 700+ students.

WOU currently has three schools, School of Foundation Studies, School of Business and Administration and School of Science and Technology, offering eleven degree programmes; six of which are in Business and Administration and the remaining five in Science and Technology. Two Postgraduate programmes currently on offer are the Commonwealth Executive MBA and the Commonwealth Executive MPA programme which are coordinated by the Centre for Graduate studies.

The University uses the ODL mode for all its programmes. English is the medium of instruction.

The learning resources provided by the university include specially designed self instructional materials in print, online interactive and web based resources, face-to-face tutor support and a robust learning management system called WawasanLearn. Libraries (including e-library) and other administrative support are also available at the regional centres. WOU operates through five regional offices at Penang, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru and Kota Bahru.

The University, now in its 4<sup>th</sup> semester, has a total active student population of 2077, though a little over 3000 learners have experienced the system to date. The total staff strength is 182, with 27 full time academics servicing the degree and postgraduate programmes.

Nearly 80% of the learners are working adults and almost 60% are returning back to education after a hiatus of several years. The learner population is diverse and distributed across the country. Each course is supported by five face-to-face tutorials corresponding to the five units of the course. These are held during the weekends and scheduled once each month in the 18-week study period of each semester. Attendance at tutorials is not mandatory and though, at a range of between 55 to 75 %, it is high by international standards, it still leaves a substantial percentage of learners unable to access support services because they are unable/ unwilling to come to the learning centres. The University therefore identified an urgent need to augment face-to-face tutorial support, to enrich the learning content through technology and to provide a customised online learner support solution.

### ***The Development of the Practice:***

After reviewing the learner profile and establishing that the majority were in employment, a solution to the problem of providing continuous learner support on an anytime, anywhere basis at the learner's convenience was sought by developing a customised online learning management system (WawasanLearn) and making it available to the learners from the first semester. WawasanLearn was developed using the open source software platform, Moodle. It initially focused on learning content management, through involvement of the instructional designers and course coordinators, supported by in-house IT expertise. Continuous testing and consequent refinement of the E-delivery platform allowed greater customisation to meet the university's objective of providing seamless access to the desired level of services to its learners across the country. For the first semester, in January 2007, the platform supported student forums, student chats and enquiries. It also carried additional resources such as PowerPoint presentations, Word and Adobe files as well as update announcements, events and links to off-site locations.

*CS 7.2 Learner support is provided using a range of media including appropriate ICTs*

*CS 7.12 Measures for feedback and monitoring of learner support services are in place.*

### ***Description of the Practice***

Built on the Moodle platform, WawasanLearn today is a robust, well established learning management system that allows a variety of support to be provided for learners in an online environment. The application allows a constructivist approach to learning, enabling users to construct new knowledge as they interact with their learning environment. The course team can actively support learning by dynamically creating and placing supplementary content and resources both proactively and in response to learner interactions. The tutors can actively participate in learner support well beyond the face-to-face sessions. The learners can access the site on a 24/7 basis except for the planned downtime between semesters. The customization of the platform to WOU requirements has resulted in the following type of resources being available on the WawasanLearn:

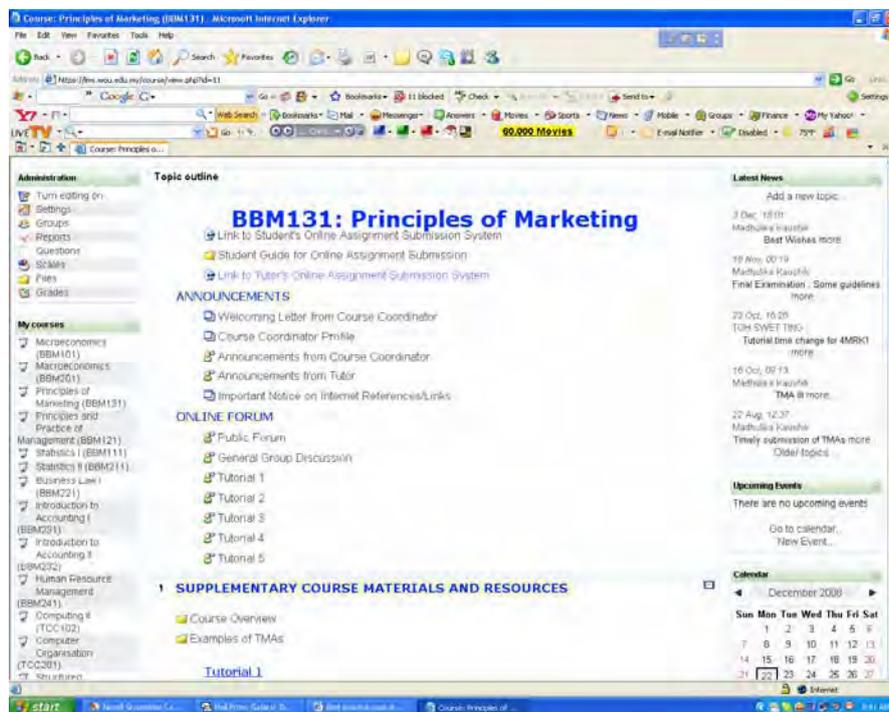
*CS 6.4 The course has ample scope for encouraging and developing creative and critical thinking, independent and lifelong learning and interpersonal communication and team work skills.*

*CS 7.5 Learners have access to the tutors through a variety of media and locations. (PI: 7.5.1)*

1. Text page: this resource is a simple page written using plain text (for example course coordinator contact information, course related strategic information, instructions for important activities like guidelines for online submission and accessing E-library).

2. Web page: this resource allows the user, in this case the course coordinator, to do some formatting and insert pictures.
3. Website links: for example, additional readings on external web sites.
4. Directory: this resource type can be used to display a whole directory (and its subdirectories) from the course file areas. Students can then browse and view all these files, e.g. PPTs, PDFs, Word etc. This enables all the supplementary course resources to be put in place in a dynamic fashion as the student moves through the course.
5. Forums: this resource provides for online discussions and exchanges on discussion topics. WawasanLearn provides a variety of forums: public forum, the tutor forum and the student forum.

The opening page of a typical course in WawasanLearn is shown below:



The learning management system operates as a ‘lean’, resource efficient mechanism in which each course coordinator works closely with the instructional design team to create and upload content at the beginning of each semester. On registration, learners are encouraged to log in and begin their interaction with the resources, their respective tutors and coordinators as well as with other learners.

WawasanLearn is now an essential delivery component for all the 34 courses offered by the university.

CS 9.5 *The institution uses technology as a learning resource and manages its activities in a technology enabled way.*

At the back-end, the system administrator manages seamless access to the platform for all stakeholders and enables the generation of monitoring reports to inform stakeholders on the use of the WawasanLearn as follows:

1. Views- the Learners who sign in and view the contents.
2. Activities-viewers who interact with the contents and move across web pages.

3. Users- viewers, who interact with the system by posting queries, downloading etc.
4. Active users-users whose use is well above the mean usage rate for all course members.
5. Parallel patterns of activity by student, course coordinators, and/ or tutors.

To ensure efficient oversight of the system, Course Coordinators have access to monitor all the tutor groups for their course, the Deans have monitoring access to all the courses offered by the School and the VC and DVC have access to all the courses offered by the University.

As the practice evolved, significant degrees of variation have been noted in the level of activity generated on the LMS, between courses, across levels of courses, and even across regional centres. The engagement of the full time Course Coordinator himself/herself was a key variable found to strongly affect the interaction on the LMS. The higher the involvement and participation of the Coordinator in providing content and academic support, the greater was the learner participation and consequent satisfaction.

The performance indicators that have evolved in terms of technical parameters, academic outcomes and learner satisfaction measures are as follows;

1. Technical performance: as the objective of the practice was to enable continuous and seamless access to all registered learners throughout the learning cycle of the semester, the uninterrupted availability of the service is taken as the primary indicator of good performance of the system. Analysis of downtime statistics and the complaints received in respect of inability to access by various stakeholders provide a measure for the efficiency of the system.

*CS 9.7 The institution has mechanisms to regularly evaluate the adequacy and accessibility of resources and services for learners and takes appropriate remedial measures to address inadequacies.*

2. Learner support indicators:

- a. Learner feedback on satisfaction level with the LMS is monitored regularly each semester through a survey instrument. A rating of 3.5 and above on the 5 point scale used is taken to be indicative of good performance.

*CS 7.12 Measures for feedback and monitoring of learner support services are in place.*

- b. Learner performance: Studies conducted on learner performance on courses offered for the last three semesters show a positive correlation between high learner participation on the LMS and their performance in term end examinations.

*CS 8.11 Learner satisfaction with the programme is appropriately measured (PI: 8.11.1)*

- c. Level of participation and quality of participation: High involvement on the part of coordinators and tutors has been found to result in improved levels of participation and improved quality of participation by learners.

*CS 7.13 Staff are trained and have a positive attitude towards learner-centred provisions and effectively and efficiently handle the learner-support services.*

## ***Resources***

The resources needed to support the effective use of WawasanLearn are:

1. Physical: At present, to facilitate the support for its 34 courses for about 2200 learners who may each have registered for 2 to 4 courses each semester, the system requires four dedicated servers (2 database and 2 web servers). A bandwidth provision of 6 MB is available to support the service at the provider end.
2. Human resources: the system requires course coordinators and instructional designers to support the front end and a system administrator to support the backend of the application. From the WOU experience, it is estimated that the present level of activity requires the equivalent of one instructional designer working fulltime to support all courses. Instructional designers resources are also utilised to provide training to the new students (half a day), tutors (1/4 of a day) every semester and to new course coordinators.

The course coordinators working on individual courses have reported that 10% to 20% of their working time is needed to develop supplementary content and remain engaged with the LMS. This time varies significantly depending on whether the course is a first or a repeat presentation.

At the back end, the development phase of about 3 months required the equivalent of one full time IT person working on the application. The present maintenance and administration phase needs the equivalent of 1/3 of a full time person.

3. Financial: The hardware cost is estimated as RM 74,040 (+/-USD 20,000 ) for the four Linux servers being used. Software costs were avoided as the open source platform was used and customised through internal expertise. The recurring costs are the cost of human resources (course coordinators and one instructional designer) as well as the cost of training the tutors, students and course coordinators.

## ***Impact/ Outcomes***

The use of WawasanLearn has resulted in:

1. The creation of a well connected and supported learning community, with continuous access to academic resources in the form of people and content;
2. Greater participation and academic control of the learning process by the course coordinators;
3. Vastly improved provision of quality academic support to the learners;
4. Higher levels of learner satisfaction and engagement with the learning activities;
5. Improved learner performance;
6. The identification of additional indicators to evaluate performance of courses, tutors and course coordinators through the analysis of activity levels and learner comments received in the various forums.
7. Enhanced confidence levels among the distance learners as they approach their term end examinations.

The major stumbling block to the successful operation of the LMS comes not from the technical, physical or financial resources but from the human resources.

1. Both tutors and course coordinators, the main providers of academic support and resources vary widely in their enthusiasm and involvement (and sometimes capacity) for the LMS. While essential fields have been defined where content must be uploaded, the continual addition of supplementary material and online content, as well as learner support in the form of instructions, guidelines and revision exercises varies a lot between course coordinators. For a learner taking up to four courses in a given semester, this may result in a highly variable learning experience across courses and affect the perception of service quality. This was partly traced to the fact that Course Coordinators did not have viewing access to the WawasanLearn pages for courses other than their own, so were unable to benefit from the good ideas of their colleagues. This has now been addressed.
2. Despite initial training, some tutors remain non-participative except for responding to direct queries by the learners. Close monitoring by course coordinators helps to alleviate this problem.
3. Bandwidth limitations and the quality of connection available at the receiving end limit the type and extent of resources the course coordinator can place on the LMS. Limited bandwidth and a high incidence of dial up connections at the learner interface have so far curtailed the possibility of using animation, flash tools and A/v resources as content.
4. Problems in access: An analysis of the complaints regarding inability to access the system indicates that the problems are usually due to
  - incorrect URL address or password;
  - the lack of integration between the system at the receiver end and at the provider end.

A help desk has been instituted and the benchmark for resolving access issues has been maintained at within 24 hours.

### ***Requirements for Adoption and Adaptation***

The practice can be adopted by any ODL provider wishing to provide online support to its learners. The WawasanLearn platform can be used as an exemplar or the Moodle application can be customised to meet institutional requirements. Moodle can be installed on any computer that can run PHP and can support an SQL type database. It can be run on Windows and Mac operating systems and different versions of Linux

Requirements to adopt/adapt the practice include

1. Academics familiar with IT;
2. Tutors capable and willing to migrate to an online support environment;
3. Instructional designers able to design the various fields and components by customising the Moodle application;
4. Information technology staff to provide back-end administration support;
5. Majority of the learner community having access to Internet connections preferably broadband;
6. Bandwidth of at least 2 MBPS at the Institutional end;

7. Training of all stakeholders including students, tutors and course coordinators;
8. Computer hardware appropriate for the scope of the application; and
9. Top management support for technology enabled learner services.

The variables that should be considered in order to decide the scope and size of application and therefore the resources required include:

- number of courses or programmes for which online support is to be extended;
- number of learners expected to access the service;
- level of interaction and therefore the traffic expected between the various stakeholders.

Fully online access to learner support can only be implemented successfully if the majority of the learners have access to high speed Internet connections. If Internet access is not widely distributed across the learner population, online learner support cannot be utilised as the core component of programme delivery, as it is likely to create a digital divide between the connected and the unconnected learners. It can then only be used as an auxiliary or value added service made available to those who can benefit from it, but not directly affecting the core value and services available to all learners.

### ***Acronyms***

LMS	Learning management system
Moodle	Modular Object Oriented Learning Environment
WOU	Wawasan Open University
LP	Learning Platform
MBPS	Megabytes per second
PHP	PHP Hypertext Preprocessor (recursive abbreviation)
SQL	Sequential query language



## Case Study – 11

### INTRODUCING AN ONLINE LEARNING COURSE AT THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

*Shironica Karunanayaka*

#### ***Editor's Note***

*This case study refers to the introduction of an on-line course: “The Teacher Educator as an Educational Technologist” by the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) with the assistance of the Distance Education Modernisation Project (DEMP) funded by the Asian Development Bank. The course aims at developing the competencies of teacher educators to design, develop, implement and evaluate appropriate educational technologies. The good practices relate to Criterion 5 – Programme Design and Development, Criterion 6 – Course Design and Development and Criterion 7 Learner Support and Progression in Standards and Performance Indicators of Distance Higher Education Institutions in Section 2. Criterion Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicators (PIs) are given in parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***The Institutional Context***

The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) was established in 1980 with the main objective of enabling students to pursue further education totally through open and distance learning (ODL) techniques, as clearly reflected in the university's vision and mission statements:

“Our vision is to be a leader in Open and Distance learning, renowned for excellence, for human resource development and empowerment of people to achieve their full potential”.

“Our mission is to enhance opportunities for adult life-long learning of people by facilitating Open and Distance learning and supporting excellence in research and scholarship”.

In keeping with the principles of open learning, OUSL is open for any person over 18 years of age irrespective of vocation, gender, race, ethnicity or religion. It has a current enrolment of over 25,000 students. About 80% of the students are in employment. OUSL's network of 28 study centres throughout the country provides a wide array of student support services. The student-centred study system is designed to support the distance learner through multiple modes including self-study print and AV materials, contact sessions, e-mail and Internet. The four faculties of OUSL - Education, Engineering Technology, Humanities and Social Sciences and Natural Sciences - provide 42 study programmes, ranging from Foundation, Certificate and Diploma level, through Undergraduate Degrees and Post Graduate Diplomas to Masters and PhD.

Addressing the need to provide more study opportunities and increased access for its remote learners, the OUSL has taken various initiatives to integrate modern Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) into its study programmes. Those initiatives have

gained momentum under the OUSL Capacity Enhancement Project and Distance Education Partnership Programme (DEPP) which are part of the ADB-funded national Distance Education Modernization Project (DEMP). A number of Faculties have developed online courses using the learning management system (LMS) Moodle. Depending on the amount of online engagement by students, these courses are categorized as ‘supplemental’, ‘blended’ or ‘online plus’. The Faculty of Education is introducing interactive online learning environments in several courses of its professional development programmes. Through these initiatives the Faculty hopes to offer more open and flexible study programmes for its adult learners, increasing the outreach and moving from the local to the international arena.

### ***The Development of the Practice***

To meet a national need, the Faculty of Education at the OUSL developed an innovative practitioner-oriented professional development programme for teacher educators, namely, the Master of Arts in Teacher Education-International (MATE-I) Programme, in partnership with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). The MATE-I programme comprises six compulsory courses and a portfolio project. All courses focus on developing the critical competencies required by practicing teacher educators. All courses are very research-oriented and of a high standard, requiring students to utilize higher-order cognitive skills such as problem solving and critical reflection.

*CS 5.1 The programmes of the institution reflect the institutional mission, goals and objectives (PIs: 5.1.1, 5.1.2).*

*CS 5.9 The Programme curriculum reflects current knowledge and practice and is sufficiently comprehensive for learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes (PI: 5.9.2).*

“The Teacher Educator as an Educational Technologist” (ESP 2242) is one of the courses in the MATE-I programme, which aims at developing the competencies of teacher educators to design, develop, implement and evaluate appropriate educational technologies. A series of learning activities that lead to completion of four major assignments enable students to achieve the desired learning outcomes. An interactive online learning environment was created to supplement this course, using a web-based LMS, Manhattan. Later, this same course was developed as a fully online course in the Moodle LMS and was offered to students as a stand-alone course (ESE 4242), being the first ‘online plus’ course in Moodle at OUSL. A course team approach was used in the development of this course, in which subject experts, instructional designers and web/multimedia developers worked together in collaboration, and international and local experts reviewed the input.

*CS 6.2 Course design takes into consideration and incorporates recent advances in ICT (PI: 6.2.3).*

### ***Description of the Practice***

The aim of the course ‘The Teacher Educator as an Educational Technologist’ is to develop competencies among teachers/teacher educators to design, develop, implement and evaluate appropriate educational technologies. As the title itself indicates, the course mainly focuses on the critical role of the teacher educator and the learning and assessment activities focus on the development of required knowledge, attitudes and skills and their application in professional practice. Accordingly, the specific objective of ‘The Teacher Educator as an Educational Technologist’ is to develop competencies and practices in relation to the following areas:

*CS 6.1 The courses are designed according to the stated programme objectives (PIs: 6.1.2, 6.1.3).*

- Designing and sequencing learning

- Selection, utilization and integration of media into teaching and learning
- Designing and developing technology-enhanced learning materials and
- Evaluation of technology-enhanced learning

This course is of 1/3 credit, equivalent to 150 study hours, and the minimum course duration is 24 weeks. There is no final examination and student performance is evaluated through continuous assessment based on the cumulative marks obtained for four compulsory inter-related assignments. (MATE -International Programme Handbook, 2004).

During the course, the participants are required to develop a rationale for using Educational Technology, design relevant learning experiences, select and use appropriate media to develop technology-enhanced learning material and evaluate its effectiveness with their students. This is achieved through Scenario-based learning (SBL), where learners are presented with authentic situations (i.e. scenarios) in the form of a storyline in which they are required to assume a key role that they might actually perform in real life and engage in challenging activities leading to achievement of the desired learning outcomes. (Karunanayaka, Lekamge, Gunawardena, Naidu, & Menon, 2007; Karunanayaka, Lekamge, Gunawardena, Naidu, & Menon, 2005; Naidu, Menon, Gunawardena, Lekamge & Karunanayaka, 2005a; Naidu, Menon, Gunawardena, Lekamge & Karunanayaka, 2005b).

Given the critical need for continuing professional development of teachers and teacher educators in the use modern ICTs in light of the increasing presence of ICTs in schools and other educational institutions as well as in everyday life, the course team decided to develop ‘The Teacher Educator as an Educational Technologist’ as an online course. The main purpose behind this decision was to concentrate not only on training teachers/teacher educators on how to integrate technology into their teaching, but also on using technology as a means for furthering their own professional development. In this regard, since the teachers and teacher educators would be following the course as distance learners while being engaged in their profession, the online mode of delivery would be much more convenient to them.

*CS 6.2 Course design takes into consideration and incorporates recent advances in ICT (PIs: 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.4).*

In 2005, ‘The Teacher Educator as an Educational Technologist’, ESP 2242, was launched as a supplemental online course using the LMS Manhattan (‘Virtual Class’) for the students of the first cohort of MATE-I, who were mature teacher educators working in different parts of the country. The course was introduced to them at a face-to-face workshop in which a training session was conducted on how to use this novel facility. Initially the LMS was mainly used by the students to receive course-related notices, submit assignments and to communicate with staff and peers. Gradually, the students were encouraged to engage in more structured activities specifically designed to support interactions with the subject content, with each other and with the instructor. Threaded discussions were conducted, initiated and moderated by the instructor, with clear guidelines and supportive web links provided as resources. Students were required to engage in each discussion by posting at least two meaningful contributions and finally, considering everybody’s views, to agree upon a suitable answer for each question. To motivate student participation, 5% of assessment marks were allocated for actively engaging in the discussions.

*CS 6.11 A variety of learning activities is provided in the course to encourage active learning, collaborative learning and self-assessment (PIs: 6.11.1, 6.11.2).*

The course was later developed as a fully online course using the Moodle LMS and has been offered as a stand-alone online course (ESE 4242) since 2007 for the same target group. Utilizing the enhanced features that exist in Moodle, a number of different types of interactive online activities have been incorporated, together with multimedia elements, creating a conducive learning environment for distance learners. It has been designed to direct and encourage self-initiated learning. The content is structured into five main sections, including an introduction to the course and four main topics in the subject. In each section, different types of activities together with supportive learning resources are scheduled on a weekly basis over 24 weeks. In addition to the main content area, learners can also access Course Overview, Learner Support, Student Input and Social Area.

*CS 7.2 Learner support is provided using a range of media including appropriate ICTs (PIs: 7.2.1, 7.2.2).*

Several forms of learner support are provided. Learners receive a ‘Student Starter Kit’ in print form, which consists of basic information regarding the online course, introductory guidelines, together with a CD ROM on multimedia development related to the course. All the other resources such as the Study Guide, Essential and Additional Reading materials, which were originally given in print form, are included as electronic resources in the Moodle learning environment. A variety of other resources such as audio-clips, PowerPoint presentations, PDF files, and Web links are also included.

*CS 6.10 A complete instructional package includes course description, syllabus, course plans, learning outcomes, details of assessments and evaluations, completion requirements, course material including multimedia supplementary learning resources, interactive course activities, community building activities and assessments, texts and media, materials and information to demonstrate the appropriate scope, sequence and depth of each course in relation to the stated goals and objectives (PIs: 6.10.1, 6.10.2).*

Initially, an orientation workshop was conducted to introduce the Moodle LMS to the learners and familiarize them with the online learning environment as this was a novel experience for them. Instructors and learners met only during this one-day orientation session and at two more hands-on workshop sessions on audio-video production and multimedia production conducted at OUSL during the course. Due to the practical nature of the course content, these skills-development workshops were considered necessary, in order to provide the learners with hands-on experience in multimedia software development. All the other activities and communications were conducted totally online. A detailed study schedule specified week-to-week activities that learners need to perform, in order to achieve the specified learning outcomes of the course.

*CS 7.10 Learner support emphasizes the development of independent learning skills (PIs: 7.10.1, 7.10.2).*

The Discussion Forum was the main type of online activity used in the course to facilitate more cooperative and collaborative learning among the distance learners. Discussion fora included tutor-mediated threaded discussions in which the whole group focused on various content-related problems and also smaller-group activities such as ‘online debate’ and ‘storyboard competition’, adding variety to the course. All these online activities were linked with the assignments, and a percentage of the assignment mark was awarded to students for their active participation in the related activities. In addition to content-related activities, other discussion fora such as ‘Announcements’, ‘Help-Wanted, Help-Given’, and ‘Virtual Canteen’ were also available for students, helping them to clarify problems and to engage in social interactions with one another..

*CS 7.1 Learner support is considered during programme development and is built into the design of the programme and course materials (PIs: 7.1.1,*

*CS 7.4 Tutorial group size allows for support to be provided to learners in various ways (PIs: 7.4.1, 7.4.2).*

Learners were also requested to maintain an online learning portfolio, by reflecting critically on their learning experiences throughout the course in order to be able to learn from challenges met, successes achieved and mistakes made.

### ***The Resources***

‘The Teacher Educator as an Educational Technologist’ is a professional development course using Scenario-based learning (SBL). SBL requires learners to take more responsibility for their learning, making it appropriate for adaptation as an online course.

The MATE-I Programme was designed and developed with assistance from COL and the design and development of this particular online course was completed with assistance from ADB/DEPP. The financial assistance, training and inputs from international and local experts received at different stages under these projects contributed to the high quality of the online course.

The course team consisted of academic staff with previous online learning experience and training who had the motivation and commitment to create an online course and become online tutors. Under ADB/DEPP, staff received training and retraining in online course design and development, as well as in online tutoring and mentoring, to support them further in the effective implementation of the online course.

The Faculty of Education’s computer laboratory facilities were used by staff to develop the course and to conduct training sessions for students. In addition, the NODES Access Centres (NACs) with modern computer and networking facilities, established throughout the country under ADB/DEMP, especially in the OUSL Regional Centres, enabled students to access the online course, and engage in the course activities.

### ***The Impact/ Outcomes***

Engagement in online learning has been a highly challenging and motivating experience for the teacher educators and teachers who studied the course, as revealed by their feedback. The opportunity to communicate quickly with academic staff and peers was identified as particularly important because they were physically remote from each other as distance learners. As practicing professionals in the field of education, they appreciated the online mode of delivery as it allowed them flexibility in the place, pace and time of learning. Participants gained confidence in handling the new technology, and heightened self-esteem from their new skills. As a result of this experience, they gained confidence in self-regulated and reflective learning. Although they faced some challenges in coping with the technology and overcoming time constraints and Internet access problems, a sense of achievement was claimed once the activities were completed (Karunanayaka, 2007; Karunanayaka, 2006a; Karunanayaka, 2006b).

The on-line learning platform provided the learners with a means for social interaction and collaboration. Provision of specific learning activities based on the discussion forum to encourage learner-instructor interactions, as well as learner-learner interactions, led to a deeper and more rational exchange of views. It provided an opportunity for students to appreciate multiple perspectives on an issue, and to reflect on their own opinions as well as others’. It also enabled them to develop a close relationship as a group, despite learning at a distance and coming from different parts of the country. The social presence of peers and instructor in the online learning environment promoted the development of a learning

community where learners shared common interests and worked together towards a common goal (Karunanayaka, 2007; Karunanayaka, 2006a; Karunanayaka, 2006b).

### ***Requirements for Adoption and Adaptation***

The process of design, development and implementation of the first online course in Moodle at OUSL, ‘The Teacher Educator as an Educational Technologist’, has been a very challenging experience for the course team. It has been equally challenging for the practicing teachers and teacher educators who were engaged in this learning process as distance learners of the OUSL while being employed full-time. Nevertheless, the online mode of delivery was well accepted by them, and online learning methods were found to have enhanced the quality of the distance learning experience.

The implementation of an online course requires careful planning, based on a thorough needs assessment. Appropriate physical and human resources including ICT infrastructure and trained, motivated and committed staff are essential for successful implementation. Furthermore, it is very important to reflect on the nature of the course, the target learners and the availability of online tutors before deciding on the online course type – whether ‘supplemental’, ‘blended’ or ‘online plus’. To ensure a successful learning experience for learners through online learning, the instructors/tutors need to facilitate learning throughout the online course by continuously encouraging, challenging and helping the learners. The learners should also be able and willing to participate regularly in the interactions, accept the change from conventional teacher-centred approaches and move towards more self-regulated learning. The learner-instructor ratio thus becomes important, and in an online plus course 20:1 would be an appropriate number.

The LMS is only a platform used for online learning, and its effectiveness in enhancing student learning will depend on the quality of the content, learning resources and student learning experiences that have been ‘designed in’ to the course. Properly designed online learning environments will allow learners to become more actively involved in developing their knowledge and understanding. An online learning environment can be effectively used to enhance student learning by designing in structured interactions that are collaborative in nature, and by placing a greater emphasis on the quality of the interactions that occur. The role of the instructor as a facilitator and moderator thus becomes very important in ensuring the effectiveness of online learning.

### ***Acronyms***

OUSL	Open University of Sri Lanka
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ADB	Asian Development Bank
DEMP	Distance Education Modernization Project
DEPP	Distance Education Partnership Programme
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
MATE-I	Master of Arts in Teacher Education (International)
LMS	Learning Management System
ET	Educational Technology
SBL	Scenario-based Learning

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## Case Study – 12

### Impact of Research on Quality Enhancement of Open Distance Learning in Dr. B.R.Ambedkar Open University

*V.Venkaiah*

#### ***Editor's Note***

*This case study demonstrates how institutional research impacts on quality enhancement in an open and distance learning university. In this case BRAOU has established a number of Centres to conduct focused research and has used the research findings as the basis for the qualitative improvement of university activities. The good practices reflected in this case study relate to Criterion 1 – Vision, Mission and Planning; Criterion 2 – Management, Organisational Culture and Leadership; Criterion 5 – Programme Design and Development; Criterion 7 – Learner Support and Progression; and Criterion 10 – Research, Consultancy and Extension Services in Standards and Performance Indicators of Distance Higher Education Institutions in Section 2. Criterion Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicators (PIs) are given in parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***The Institutional context***

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU), originally known as Andhra Pradesh Open University, was established by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh in 1982. As the first Open University of India, BRAOU paved the way for founding thirteen other Open Universities, one at the national level and twelve at the State level. The establishment of BRAOU was a great educational event. It heralded a new era and set a new trend in India's higher education system.

In the beginning, the University focused on widening access to educational opportunities to those who were kept out of the formal traditional higher education institutions. In pursuit of its goal of extending higher educational opportunities to the masses and reaching out to the unreached, the University admitted large numbers of students. It currently offers 56 academic programmes covering various subjects at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. During the past 25 years, 106,193 students have successfully completed their studies and received Certificates, Diplomas and Degrees from the University.

The organizational structure of the University is designed to facilitate the successful and effective functioning of a distance teaching university.

The University provides a variety of support to its learners through a network of 23 Regional Coordination Centres (RCCs) and 208 Study Centres spread over the State, and adopts a multi-media based instructional system

## ***Development of the Practice***

One of the objectives of the University is “to make provision for research and for the advancement and dissemination of knowledge”. In line with this objective, BRAOU started offering Ph.D. and M.Phil programmes in Developmental Studies in 1985 in collaboration with Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad, thereby creating an environment conducive to research at the University. The University has also created a number of specialist research centres to focus the research effort in line with its two-fold mission of reaching out to the unreached and achieving excellence as a distance education provider. Faculty members undertake research projects in their own disciplines as well as in the field of distance education. The University has transformed the research findings and suggestions into feed forward to enhance its efficiency and the effectiveness.

*CS 10.2 Findings of research underpin the development of the programmes and the courses of the institution (PIs: 10.2.1, 10.2.2, 10.2.3).*

## ***Description of the Practice***

In line with the mission and vision of the institution, the University has established various specialist research centres, including the Women’s Development and Extension Centre and the Centre for Social Empowerment to focus its research efforts in priority areas of social development.

*CS 10.1 The institution actively encourages and promotes research by academic staff and learners (PI: 10.1.1).*

The University started the Women’s Studies Cell (later renamed as the Women’s Development and Extension Centre) in 1993.

The main objectives of the Centre are:

- To critically study the problems, aspirations and needs of women learners;
- To promote incorporation of Women’s studies perspectives in course offerings;
- To encourage research on socially relevant areas directly linked with women’s development and status;
- To generate documentation services on women’s issues;
- To provide information, knowledge and skills for the economic independence of women, particularly for women learners and their family members;
- To enhance access to legal literacy and information on women’s rights and entitlements in society;
- To sensitize teachers and administration on the need for Women’s empowerment;
- To organize extension activities in the area of health, nutrition, environment, entrepreneurship, etc.

*CS 10.6 The institution is responsive to community needs and conducts relevant extension and awareness programmes (PI 10.6.1)*

The Centre has conducted a variety of extension and community education programmes covering themes such as women and health, women and law, women and media, women’s rights, women entrepreneurship etc. With the support and collaboration of the State government, it conducted a large scale Statewide HIV/AIDS Awareness Programme in 2002 through its network of study centres.

The Centre for Social Empowerment was started in 2007 as a project supported by the Distance Education Council of India (DEC). The vision of the Centre is to bring the marginalized into mainstream and empower them to reap the fruits of development through

continuing education. One of the important functions of the Centre is to take up various collaborative research projects, surveys, evaluation studies, impact studies and other field-based investigations. Both Centres are actively engaged in extension activities and research for the development of specific equity groups.

In 1987 the Centre for Evaluation was established as a separate research division to maintain academic standards and promote quality assurance by undertaking research on different subsystems of university operations and by utilizing the research findings to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of distance teaching and learning. The Centre for Evaluation focused on

*CS 10.4 There are relevant mechanisms and procedures to monitor and evaluate research within the institution (PIs: 10.4.1, 10.4.3, 10.4.5).*

- Planning and conducting both empirical and descriptive research on various aspects of distance education;
- Evolving research based alternatives for improving the instructional process;
- Strengthening of teaching courses at different levels;
- Strengthening of courses through formative and summative evaluation; and
- Disseminating research findings in the field of distance education; and undertaking formative evaluation of courses.

The research studies undertaken by the Centre have enabled the University to reaffirm its mission to:

- Use education for social change;
- Bridge the gap between the rural and the urban by increasing the outreach;
- Give a developmental orientation to all courses;
- Offer courses which are need-based and which are in demand by people; and
- Design courses for upskilling and reskilling for enhancing vocational competence.

*CS 10.1 The institution actively encourages and promotes research by academic staff and learners (PI: 1.1.2).*

In 2001, order to strengthen and systematize individual as well as institutional research, the University established a Research Academy of Distance Education in, named after Prof. G.Ram Reddy, the founder Vice-Chancellor of the University to replace the Centre for Evaluation. The mission of GRADE is “Research and Training for Professional Excellence and System Development”. The objectives of the Academy are:

- To carry out system-based research in distance education in India, Asian region and beyond;
- To conduct workshops, seminars and training programmes;
- To collaborate with institutions and agencies in India and abroad to undertake the research in distance education;
- To undertake consultancy services and commission projects related to the distance education system;
- To promote, coordinate, fund and sponsor research projects;
- To publish research work in the field of distance education and to establish and maintain a data bank;
- To receive grants, scholarships, endowments and other donations;
- To institute awards, endowments and prizes;

*CS 1.4 Policy and planning are supported by systematic institutional research (PIs: 1.4.1, 1.4.2).*

- To grant fellowships to carry out research in distance education; and
- To undertake evaluation studies.
- To offer PhD programmes in ODL

GRADE organises interactive workshops on research methodology in distance education and prepares manuals and handbooks on research methodology. Its specific focus is on impact studies, longitudinal studies and action research projects and on developing a comprehensive database of the University to facilitate research. As part of its broader capacity building role, it has also organized a number of national and regional conferences and workshops on ODL.

In order to promote system-based research, GRADE started a Ph.D. programme in open and distance education in 2003. Similarly, to promote quality assurance, GRADE conducted research and published a 'Quality Assurance Series' through its 'Quality Assurance Cell' established in 2002. Since 2003, GRADE has published several books, reports, monographs quality assurance manuals etc. based on the research carried out in the Academy.

GRADE provides two international visiting fellowships to distance education professionals working in Asian Open Universities to enable them to carry out a minor research project connected with the promotion and development of distance education. Between 2002 and 2008, nine scholars from seven different countries have benefited from the scholarship scheme. The fellowships promoted cross-cultural research in ODL and the sharing of research experience and best practices among the Open Universities in the Asian region.

### ***Resources***

The University allocates funds annually to GRADE via the University budget. In addition to the funds provided by the University every year, the Centre receives annual grants (Central Govt. funds) from the Distance Education Council (DEC) towards research and quality assurance.

In addition to the grants received by the University from the Distance Education Council, several teachers have submitted major/minor research project proposals on ODL to the Commonwealth of Learning, Distance Education Council, University Grants Commission, Department of Science and Technology and other funding agencies from time to time and received grants ranging from Rs.50,000 to Rs.500,000 for each Project. These grants and the University policy of supporting research on a continuing basis have sustained the research culture in the University.

### ***Impact and Outcomes***

The impact of the institutional research conducted at BRAOU is reflected in the qualitative performance of the University. It enabled the University to:

- Plan, create and produce learning materials of exceptional quality;
- Provide learners (wherever they are) with learning materials well in time;
- Design effective alternative delivery systems from time to time;

- Develop well-conceived teaching styles, teaching methods and student support services clearly designed to promote effective independent learning;
- Provide learners with opportunities for interaction with others in a variety of ways;
- Monitor key aspects of the operation at the headquarters and study centres on a regular basis using the data to assist evaluation and improvements;
- Monitor student progress regularly and modify the materials and the system in response to findings;
- Evaluate the materials (both in development and use) and the services offered, in a systematic way;
- Provide training and support to student support providers and to the staff at the headquarters, Regional Coordination Centres and Study Centres;
- Coordinate the functioning of sub-systems in the whole operation so that conditions for learning are created for the learners;
- Enable learners to complete courses successfully with results comparable to effective conventional systems, or with demonstrable skills;
- Capacity building of the teachers and research scholars as they engage in research endeavours;
- Enabling teachers of the University to engage in individual research projects and providing guidance to research students.

### ***Requirements for Adoption and Adaptation***

As the first Open University of India, BRAOU has recognized the importance of research in open distance learning since its inception and has developed a clear policy. It established research centres and provided them with the necessary resources – infrastructure, staff, project funding – to enable them to fulfil their mission. The research outcomes helped the University to take timely, evidence-based decisions to enhance the quality of processes in the institution, which in turn substantially improved the quality of services to learners.

The experience of BRAOU suggests that properly funded institutional research is essential for enhancing the quality of services to distance learners. Open Universities and Dual Mode Universities should establish a research policy with clearly defined objectives that are aligned with institutional mission and goals, targeted at achieving academic and institutional improvement and enhancing the quality of learner support; and assign responsibility to a designated unit to nurture a research culture in the institution.

**Annexure-1: Enrolment of students into various Academic Programmes of BROAU  
(1983-84 TO 2008-09)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Student strength</b>
1983-84	6,321
1984-85	22,462
1985-86	75,407
1986-87	35,402
1987-88	30,534
1988-89	32,773
1989-90	35,062
1990-91	43,690
1991-92	57,144
1992-93	58,336
1993-94	59,796
1994-95	55,018
1995-96	79,825
1996-97	73,257
1997-98	88,341
1998-99	93,477
1999-2000	1,01,212
2000-01	99,517
2001-02	90,492
2002-03	1,28,391
2003-04	1,33,452
2004-05	1,50,918
2005-06	1,60,416
2006-07	1,50,474
2007-08	1,56,351
2008-09	1,61,769

**ANNEXURE-2**  
**Norms of the International Visiting Fellowship Scheme**

1. Faculty members and other academic staff (such as other academics, coordinators/tutors/ counselors) working in the Universities / Distance Education Institutions in Asia with post graduation degree (Master's degree) as minimum academic qualification and with teaching and research experience / experience in course development and student support services in Open Distance Education system and wishing to pursue any research project connected with the promotion and development of distance education activities, can apply for the fellowship.
2. The duration of the fellowship is four to eight weeks.
3. The cost of the air travel will be borne by the parent institution of the awardee. The awardee will be paid by GRADE an allowance of INR 750/- (Indian Rupees seven hundreds and fifty only) per day.
4. BRAOU will provide accommodation in its Guesthouse by charging a nominal amount of Rs.180/- per night.
5. The visiting fellow will be attached to GRADE to pursue the work of the research project. The visiting fellow is required to present his/her research proposal at a seminar organized by GRADE during the first week of the fellowship.
6. The visiting fellow is also required to submit a report on the work done during the fellowship period to BRAOU at the end of the visit. He/She will present his/her findings at a seminar, organized by GRADE, during the last week of the fellowship period.
7. The visiting fellow will be provided secretarial assistance including the stationery required for completing the report. Computer/internet facilities will be made available at GRADE for data or word processing.
8. Research Project proposals (with all the details such as problem, objectives, research methodology, current relevance to Open Distance Learning and research outcome) including the detailed Bio-data of the interested candidates should reach the Director, GRADE, as per the dates mentioned in the notification every year.
9. The selection will be based on the strength of the research proposal and its current relevance to Open Distance Learning.

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## Case Study – 13

### **LEARNING FOR LIVELIHOOD: THE ROLE OF A KNOWLEDGE INFOMEDIARY IN A LIFELONG LEARNING FOR FARMERS PROJECT IN RURAL INDIA**

***K. Balasubramanian***

#### ***Editor's Note***

*This case study of Learning for Livelihoods- Agriculture experience describes the process and impact of the concept of lifelong learning for Farmers (L3 Farmers) propounded by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) in a village in south India. It focuses on the role of those who mediate information sharing and strengthening knowledge creation, termed as Knowledge Infomediaries. The good practices relate to Criterion 5, Programme Design and Development, Criterion 6 – Course Design and Development, Criterion 7 – Learner Support and Progression and Criterion 10 – Research, Consultancy and Extension Services in Standards and Performance Indicator for Agriculture Education in Section 3. Criteria Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicator/s (PIs) are given within parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***The Context***

In spite of credible performance in agriculture, the direct relationship between the primary sector and poverty is still an issue which many countries, including India, are trying to address. An effective extension system is an imperative condition for breaking the links between the primary sector and poverty. However, in countries like India, the extension system has limitations in terms of size and human resources to reach millions of farmers and agricultural labourers. Hence, new paradigms are being explored by the government and many development agencies to evolve an extension system which could address the issues of agricultural productivity as well as livelihood.

The concept of Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3 Farmers) was propounded by Commonwealth of Learning (COL) as a means of reaching farmers and the poor in the primary sector using Information and Communication Technology. This case study describes the process and impact of the L3 for Farmers project in a village called Uppukottai, Theni district of Tamil Nadu, India. Uppukottai is an agricultural village endowed with canal and groundwater irrigation. However, it has a large number of agricultural labourers belonging to the marginalized section of society, the *dalith* community. The women among the labour force get limited days of employment and hence they have always been looking for opportunities to enhance their livelihood security. However, due to limitations in various extension systems, these women did not have access to information and knowledge regarding various opportunities.

## ***The Development of the Practice***

COL developed a framework for the Lifelong Learning (L3) for Farmers Project, to try to reach large number of small farmers and marginalized sections of the rural community in Africa, South Asia and Small Island States of the Commonwealth. Using Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and ICT, the project aims at building the capacity among farmers, landless labourers and extension officials which could help them to develop value-added farming, encourage more sustainable use of natural resources, strengthen their ability to face globalization, and ensure food and livelihood security. The concept envisages a global and local partnership between research institutions, extension agencies, farming communities and financial institutions.

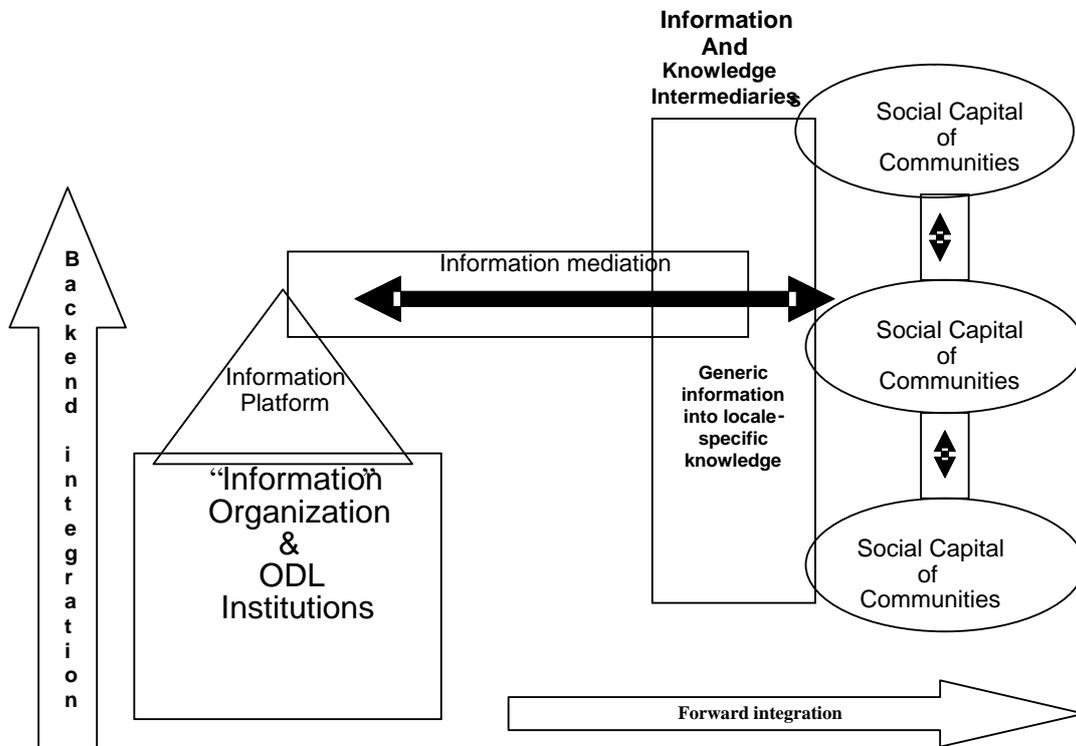
Extension systems in many developing countries have emphasised formal, structured, face-face classroom based training and field demonstration programmes. In countries with limited extension facilities, it may be difficult to reach all the farmers through structured, real-time face-to-face training programmes. Studies have shown that self-directed personal-strategic learning is playing a major role in the formal industrial sector as well as in the agricultural sector. Very few attempts have been made to integrate the self-directed learning in an extension system. In the L3 approach, ICT is used to enhance opportunities for self-directed learning and formal structured learning is perceived as a tool for strengthening self-directed learning.

## ***Development of the Practice***

The paradigm shift in extension demands a new identity for the extension agent or organization. This new role is that of Knowledge Infomediary (KI) and a KI can be an individual or an organization. A KI is involved in the following activities:

1. Facilitating community level Knowledge Management by strengthening the social capital.
2. Helping the community through social capital to strengthen and internalize Agriculture Knowledge System and Agriculture Information System
3. Enhancing the opportunities for self-directed learning in the community through ICT and blended learning and enabling the community to convert generic information into locale-specific knowledge.
4. Enabling the community to understand the value system operating in the agricultural sector at the local, national and international levels.

When the community internalizes the above four activities, a Social Learning Capital emerges. Thus L3 perceives an individual learner in the context of her/his community. The framework for L3 with KI is as follows:



### Description of the Practice

In Uppukottai, COL identified Mr. Gnanakulandai as KI. Mr. Gnanakulandai, a post graduate from Uppukottai, who started a private internet kiosk using the technology of Wireless in Local Loop (WiLL). He obtained bank loans to start the kiosk. When COL was initiating the L3 project he volunteered to start the project in the village. According to him, the rural internet kiosk would be sustainable only if it made a difference to the livelihood security of the community. COL trained him in mobilizing the community and training the community in self-directed learning using ICT. He mobilized 53 dalith, landless women into an association and trained them in various aspects of self directed learning.

CS 5.10 Programme design and development pays attention to gender equity, multiculturalism, social justice and cohesion, ethical values and environmental sustainability (PI: 5.10.1).

CS 7.17 Mechanisms are in place to enable learners to acquire skills necessary to perform functions of knowledge info-mediaries (PI: 7.17.1).

Mr. Gnanakulandai was actively involved with COL in developing the following premises for L3 approach:

*If rural agricultural credit is blended with appropriate capacity building the performance of rural credit would be much better due to increased productivity and returns and decreased non-performing assets (NPA) levels.*

*Capacity building would also enlarge the market for bank credit among small and marginal farmers and among other marginalized section of the rural poor.*

*Through structures such as rural internet kiosks, rural telecentres etc modern ICT can facilitate capacity building processes in a spatial-temporal context which are financially viable, economically feasible and socially acceptable.*

Mr. Gnanakulandai helped COL in a series of negotiations with the banking sector. He believed that if the premises are proven, the banks stand to gain and since banking sector is also financing the rural Internet kiosks, the programme may help to strengthen the economic and financial viability of the kiosks. Such a proof may facilitate a larger investment from banking sector on capacity building and extension particularly through modern ICT and L3.

The L3 project also focused on building the learning around specific livelihood activity in which the women of Uppukottai are interested. Using value chain approach, L3 made an attempt to evolve a holistic picture integrating backend and forward linkages including credit and market. The aim was to develop the entrepreneurial qualities of the poor women. When Mr. Gnanakulandai discussed about the livelihood issues, the women preferred dairy industry since the value chain in this sector is clear and transparent.

*CS 5.4 Programmes are designed and developed taking into consideration the learners' needs, the range of learning environments in which they will operate and the resources available to them (PI: 5.4.1).*

With the help of COL and other internet kiosk operators in the region Mr. Gnanakulandai developed multimedia materials in dairy business plans. He encouraged the participating women to visit the kiosk once a week for one hour and go through the learning materials. With his help the women developed the business proposal and credit plan on the basis of which the bank sanctioned loans. In consultation with the women and the experts from Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS), multimedia learning materials were prepared and the women underwent training based on the production and management cycle of dairy sector. The illiterate and the semi-literate women came to know about the potentials of internets and emails. Mr. Gnanakulandai encouraged the learners to interact with experts through video email. The internet was used to understand the market behaviour, weather etc. In addition to the experts from the Universities, experienced personnel involved in marketing and credit prepared the relevant learning materials. Mr. Gnanakulandai helped the women to enter into a buy-back arrangement for the milk with local milk cooperative union which trained him in various aspects of dairy management. Printed Newsletters consolidating the materials from internet and intranet were also circulated among the learners regularly. He encouraged the women to use mobile phones to discuss with men and women involved in dairy in other villages in the region. He also developed multimedia learning materials for the cattle brokers.

*CS 6.2 Course design takes into consideration various delivery mechanisms and incorporates appropriate and contextualized ICT tools (PIs: 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.4).*

*CS 6.3 Courses are designed based on learner-centred principles that focus on the need for relevant knowledge and skills (PI: 6.3.4).*

*CS 6.4 Courses have ample scope for encouraging and developing creative and critical thinking, independent and lifelong learning and interpersonal communication and team work skills and extend beyond the theoretical framework to provide opportunities to develop the skills required for research, innovation and outreach*

*CS 6.3 Courses are designed based on learner-centred principles that focus on the need for relevant knowledge and skills (PI: 6.3.4).*

## ***The Resources***

Mr. Gnanakulandai established a rural internet kiosk during 2004 with an investment of US\$1200 borrowed from a bank. His internet kiosks consist of computers with internet facilities, printers and mobile phones. He found that due to the absence of locally relevant information, the villagers were not visiting the kiosk. When COL initiated the L3 for farmers project Mr. Gnanakulandai realised the following important factors:

1. The rural internet kiosk can be effective only when it can add value to the livelihood process of the rural community by playing the role of knowledge-infomediary.
2. An active utiliser constituency with well mobilized community is essential for sustaining the rural internet kiosk. Such a constituency can evolve into a strong social capital.
3. An effective networking with education and research institutions, credit and marketing institutions is vital for playing the role of knowledge infomediary.
4. A knowledge infomediary needs to be capable of mobilizing the community, networking and developing locally relevant ODL materials by converting generic information into locale-specific knowledge.

COL helped Mr. Gnanakulandai in building his capacity in mobilizing, networking and in developing locally relevant ODL materials. He was linked with TANUVAS which helped him respond to the community's needs in the dairy sector. During 2004-2005 COL provided a sum of US\$ 3000 for implementing the project.

## ***The Impact and Outcomes***

### *At the Knowledge Infomediary Level*

1. Mr. Gnanakulandai has gained expertise in developing locally relevant ODL multimedia materials, in accessing information from various sources and in communicating to the rural community.
2. By placing his rural internet kiosk amidst the dairy programme, his income earning potential has increased and he earns an additional income of US\$1500 per annum as commission for mobilizing the milk and milk products from the women producers and forwarding them to the cooperatives. He also sells fodders and composite feeds.
3. He has realized the importance of social capital and hence he has focused on mobilizing the women into Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and he is in the process of linking these groups with banks for dairy loan.
4. More villagers visit his kiosks for learning, browsing and communication. During 2004-2005, his kiosk had 50 person/hours of visitors and during 2005-2006, it went up to 400 person/hours.

### *At the Community Level*

1. The learning through computer, self-directed learning through FAQs, horizontal transfer of knowledge within the women's group and blended learning helped the women to increase the productivity of milk. While the average productivity of the milk in the region is 10 litres per animal per day, the women involved in the project managed to get 15 litres per day per animal. The project brought a credit flow worth

of Rs. 2.7 million and this investment helped to generate nearly Rs.5.3 million worth of milk among 53 poor households in two years.

2. The vertical flow of information from universities and the horizontal transfer knowledge within the community helped the women acquire better negotiation power. They interacted with banking and insurance agencies and bargained for better delivery of services. During 2006-2007, the animals were affected by virus diseases in spite of vaccinations which resulted in lowering of milk yield. The women negotiated with the bank regarding the repayment of loans and when Government of India waived the loans of rural poor, the women were benefited from the scheme.

#### Requirements for adoption and adaptation

1. COL withdrew from this area during 2006. The mobilization, learning through ODL ( using multimedia materials and mobile based FAQs) and the economic activities are still continuing. The project shows that if all the stakeholders come together under a win-win framework, then the project can initiate a self-sustaining development process.
2. The project saw ODL as a value addition tool for livelihood security and focused on developing an informal learning environment in the context of social capital such as women's associations, Self-Help groups etc. The development of such social structures would be a vital element in the success of similar initiatives.
3. An individual knowledge infomediary requires the support of a facilitating agency for at least two to three years. This support is required to enhance the capacity, networking and technology skills. In the present project, COL acted as a facilitating agency for a period of one year. After its withdrawal, Mr. Gnanakulandai found it more difficult to respond to the community's needs.

#### ***Acronyms***

COL	Commonwealth of Learning
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KI	Knowledge Infomediary
L3	Lifelong Learning
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
SHG	Self-Help Group
TANUVAS	Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University
WiLL	Wireless in Local Loop
NPA	Non-performing Asset

## Case Study – 14

### University-Centred Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3 Farmers) – A Pilot Project of COL

*Uma Coomaswamy; Kshanika Hirimburegama and Krishna Alluri*

#### ***Editor's note***

*This case study deals with learning for livelihoods experiences in agriculture. It outlines the framework developed by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) for Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3 Farmers) and describes the establishment of university centred initiatives of the L3 Farmers project in Sri Lanka. The good practices relate to Criterion 1 – Vision, Mission and Planning, Criterion 3 – Learners, Criterion 5 – Programme Design and Development, Criterion 7 – Learner Support and Progression, Criterion 9 – Learning Infrastructure and Resources and Criterion 10- Research, Consultancy and Extension services, in Standards and Performance Indicators for Agriculture Education at Section 3. Criteria Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicator/s (PIs) are given within parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***Context***

Sri Lanka is a tropical island with a land area of 65,610 sq.km. and a population of over 19.5 million. Despite a legacy of excellent educational and social indicators and best on Human Development Index in South Asia poverty levels remain high (World Bank and ADB, 2005). Farmers cultivating small plots of land with few off-farm sources of family income and casual workers account for a large share of the poor. Agriculture plays a dominant role in the socio-economics of Sri Lanka providing for the livelihood of over seventy five percent of the rural population. Agriculture is also an important determinant of Gross Domestic Product, directly accounting for around one fifth of the national output and employing more than one-third of the labour force, providing inputs for agriculture processing industry and supplying a large share of domestic food requirements (Dharmawardene, 2001).

Today's farmers are challenged by globalisation, competitive market forces, need for value-added farming and more sustainable use of natural resources. Traditionally, farmers depended heavily on extension services. But, the agriculture extension service of the state has declined over the years and is inadequate and ineffective to meet the present needs. To make farming a business, today's farmers need to revolutionise their agricultural methods and substantially improve their knowledge and skills in the food – market chain. The nature, scale, urgency and extent of learning and skills required by farmers to face today's challenges is such that it cannot be met by the conventional extension methods. The rural communities' needs for quality assured just-in-time information, learning, motivation, organisation, resources and training are to be addressed by innovative approaches, integrating with modern Information Communication Technologies (ICT) and Open and Distance Education (ODE). Government's 'Gama Neguma' (Prosperous Village) (Mahinda Chintana, 2006) Livelihood Development Programme focuses on rural credit, extension and self-employment generating agro-industries.

## *Development of the Project*

A Framework was developed by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) (Commonwealth of Learning, 2005), for Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3 Farmers) that empowers farming communities to improve their knowledge and skills for livelihoods through the use of ODL and ICT. It is based on facilitating exchange of information and self-directed learning for livelihoods through a human and electronic network of connected partnerships between farming communities, knowledge institutions, ICT centres, community based organizations and banks. Through such a framework, COL and its partners are making an attempt to reach millions of farmers in Africa, South Asia and Small Island States.

The recent developments in Sri Lanka include ICT enabled agricultural and rural development; computer literacy of the population; greater availability of ICT networks (Shironika & Rupa, 2005), and internet penetration in rural sectors; islandwide establishment of 'vidatha' knowledge centres to facilitate transfer of modern technology to rural areas from universities, national and international research stations; ICT enabled learning and management of education put in place on a national scale through the ADB Project (Coomaraswamy and Abeywardena, 2007) to improve efforts to reach the unreached.

With its vision of integrating the concept of empowerment, its mission to enhance lifelong learning and its gender-sensitive approach, the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) had an opportunity to play an anchor role in facilitating the L3 Farmers programme in Sri Lanka. OUSL projectised the concept by bringing various stakeholders together and defining the roadmap (Coomaraswamy, 2006). Situation analysis of certain existing outreach projects carried out with consultancy support from COL (Balasubramaniam, 2006), revealed that the pilot phase could be established in some places with appropriate perspectives towards extension and credit. The process map developed for COL's L3 Farmers programme is illustrated in Figure 1.

*CS 10.6 The institution is responsive to community needs and conducts relevant research, extension and awareness programmes to solve the real life problems.(PI:10.6.3).*

As OUSL envisioned that strong institutional and government support would be the key to the success of sustaining the L3 Farmers Project in Sri Lanka, it played an active role in mobilizing strong support for this endeavour both at national and institutional levels and in promoting national universities under the UGC to implement pilot initiatives. Through this was born the unique **university-centred L3 Farmers Programme in Sri Lanka.**

*CS 1.1 The institution has a stated vision and mission that is supported by specific and clearly defined goals and objectives within the context of national development priorities and the latest international trends. (PIs:1.1.1, 1.1.4).*

The pilot programme is implemented by several universities and coordinated by a senior faculty member of the respective university. The National Coordinator, L3 Farmers-Sri Lanka, a COL Consultant, coordinates the programme with all university partners implementing pilot initiatives. The national coordinator is also responsible for conceptualizing the project and initiating linkages and partnerships at the national level.

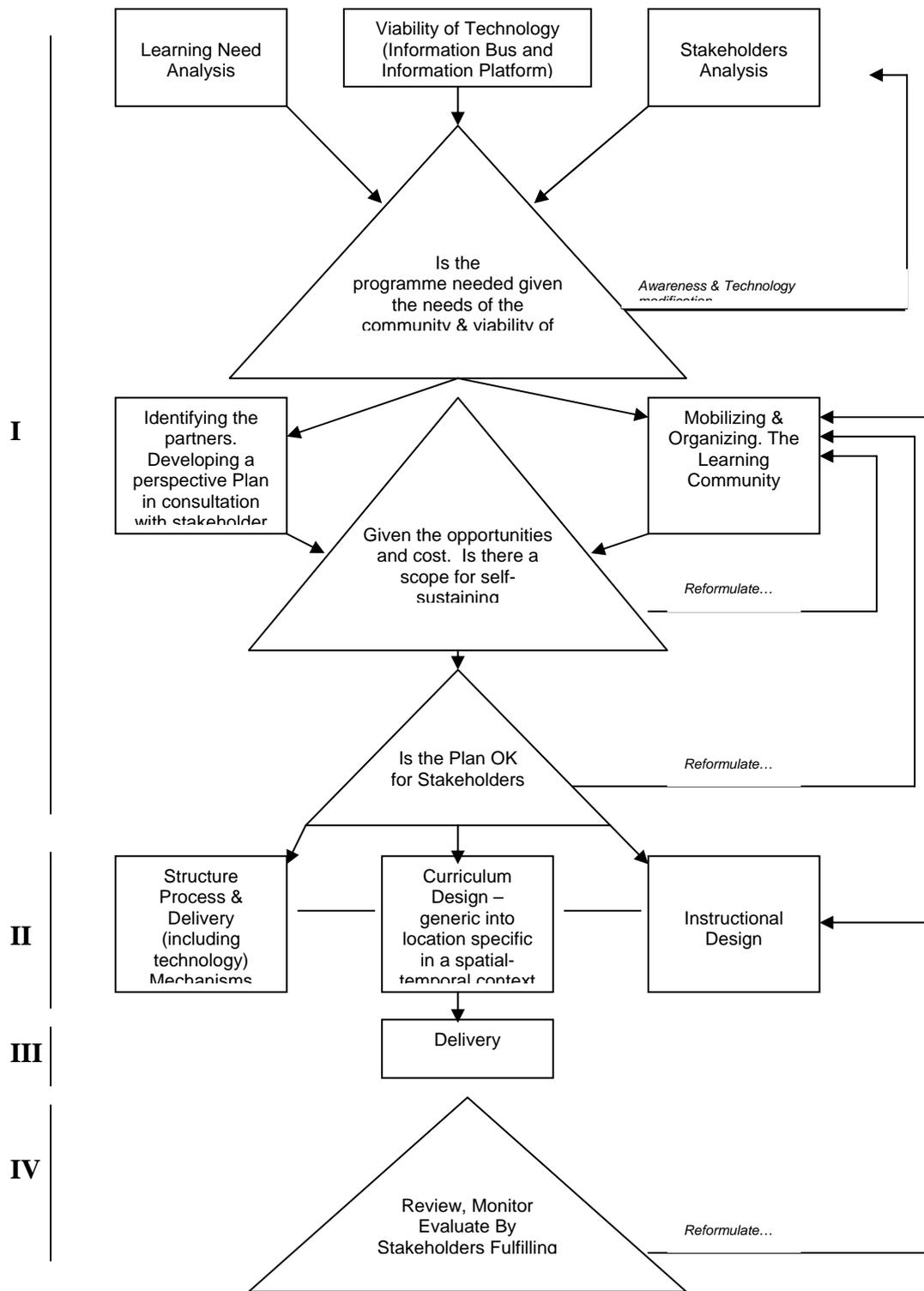


Figure 1 – The Process Map of L3 Farmers Programme of COL (Balasubramaniam 2006)

## *Description of the Project* (Coomaraswamy, Hirimburegama and Alluri, 2008)

The implementing universities in consultation with stakeholders and village communities used the relevant data collected for the selected villages on stakeholder analysis, learner-needs analysis, status of social mobilization of the community and technology viability assessment in the preparation of a Perspective Plan for each village. The Perspective Plan contains the objectives, inputs, operation details, outputs, outcomes and impacts, costing and financial plan. The Perspective Plan also defines the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder group.

*CS 5.2 The programme objectives are clearly defined and focus on the development of the learners' knowledge, attitudes and skills and their application in professional practice including research and extension where applicable. (PIs: 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3).*

The project is receiving support at various levels including

- National level [the President's 'Gama Neguma' (A prosperous village), Ministries, Government Departments, University Grants Commission].
- Institutional level (Conventional universities, The Open University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Council for Agricultural Research Policy, Agriculture Research and Development Institutes, etc.).
- Non-Governmental Organizations.
- Professional organizations (Sri Lanka Association for Distance Educators).

*CS 9.9 The institution has policies and strategies for partnerships and collaboration (PIs:9.9.1, 9.9.2).*

Key themes of the Project are:

- *Technology mediated open and distance education (Tech-MODE)* which is learner-centred reflecting the learning needs, preferences and styles of learners and learners having as much control as possible over what, where, when and how they learn. It uses the delivery mode of distance education through a variety of media including text, audio-video tapes, interactive CD-ROMs and internet.
- *Lifelong Learning* implying interactive continual learning throughout the life span and linking learning to the real world.
- *Partnerships and collaborations* to address various dimensions of the project in a holistic manner. They broaden the range of ideas and perspectives that can be brought to bear on a problem. Through interactive learning partners come to understand each other's strengths and weaknesses and will work together more effectively.

*CS 5.4 Programmes are designed and developed taking into consideration the learners' needs, the range of learning environments in which they will operate and the resources available to them (PIs: 5.4.1, 5.4.3).*

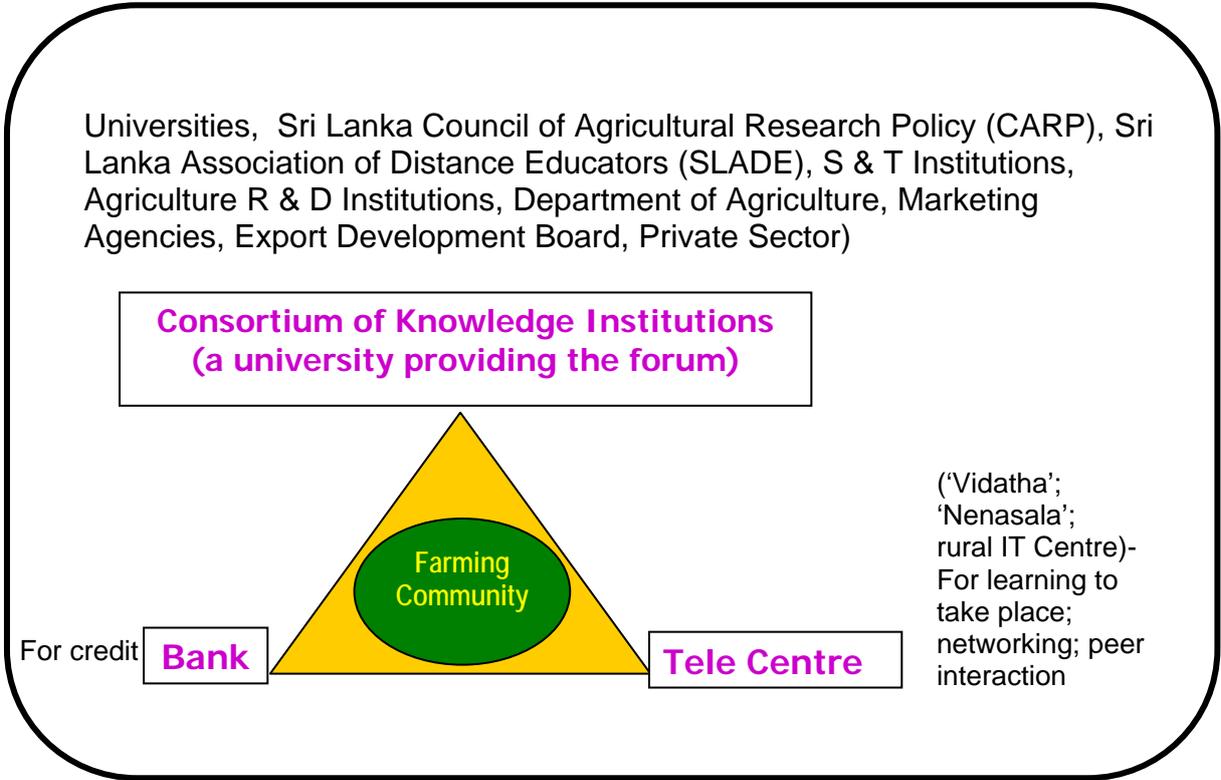
*CS 5.5 Programmes are developed and modified in consultation with associate stakeholders to ensure sensitivity to emerging patterns in local and global trends and demands and current socio-economic changes (PI:5.5.3).*

*CS 6.3 Courses are designed based on learner-centred principles that focus on the need for relevant knowledge and skills (PI:6.3.4).*

- *Social mobilization and organization* for building cognitive social capital and structural social capital. This is the crucial aspect of a bottom-up participatory process. It enables the community to identify its own problems and helps it to assume responsibility in planning, managing, controlling and assessing the problem-solving activities i.e. a *demand-driven approach*. It engages people's participation in achieving a specific development goal through self-reliant activities.

The Project involves four key partners: *Farming Community; Knowledge Institutions; Rural Information Communication Technology (ICT) Centres; Banks* (Figure 2). With adequate focus and attention on all four partners the Project would offer a win-win situation for all stakeholders making it self-generating, self-sustaining and self-replicating.

*CS 10.7 Research, consultancy and extension services are actively promoted to build linkages with outreach for end users on farm and in industry*



**Figure 2 – University-centred L3 Model in Sri Lanka  
(adapted from Balasubramaniam 2006)**

**Farming Community**

The farming community (farmers, agricultural labourers, youth) mobilized into associations is the prime target of the L3 Farmers Project. Through social mobilization and organization they are enabled to create their own vision for development of their village. They form learning communities and access information and skills for improved livelihood. Community involvement has fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility for community development. Knowledgeable

*CS 3.3 A continuous knowledge generation process based on the data and formal & informal information flow and feedback is in place to understand the needs and issues of learners and provide inputs to programme design, learning management strategies and*

farmers with leadership attributes who understand the community and their needs have been identified by the farming communities to act as ‘leaders’ and ‘facilitators’.

*CS 3.6 The institution has mechanisms to facilitate a process of socialization among learners and various relevant stakeholders (PIs:3.6.1, 3.6.2, 3.6.5).*

The farmer associations are linked with Rural Cooperative Society Bank which extends credit to association members. The associations are also linked to the buyers of agricultural products which will help to create an efficient national and international marketing system.

*CS 6.2 Course design takes into consideration various delivery mechanisms and incorporates appropriate and contextualized ICT tools*

### **Knowledge Institutions**

Educational, social and marketing institutions who can contribute in a variety of specializations that could help in agriculture and rural development and who are committed to serve rural communities have been brought to work as a Consortium. A Consortium of multidisciplinary organizations/institutions is essential to address the different dimensions of the project in a holistic manner. Consortium members provide demand-driven knowledge and skills to the farming community. Need-based content is developed collaboratively in a self learning format and delivered in forms that are appropriate to the communities and circumstances. This enhances the capability of the farmers in developing ODL content by themselves. Learning materials are also posted on a Wiki Educator website. Recognition of farmers’ experiential learning and two-way learning between the consortium members and the farming community is perceived as key to the success of learning.

*CS 7.11 Opportunities are provided for academic and social peer interaction, vertically with tutor and horizontally with peers*

*CS 6.12 Appropriate personnel and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of course materials and their production*

*CS 7.13 Staff are trained and have a positive attitude towards learner-centred provisions and effectively and efficiently handle the learner-support services*

Consortium members meet regularly to discuss the Project and evolve the structure of the Consortium. In Sri Lanka the Consortium includes Universities; Research and Development Institutions; Science and Technology Institutions; Council for Agricultural Research Policy; Ministries of Science and Technology, Irrigation; Departments of Agriculture, Agrarian Services; National Livestock Development Board and Export Development Board. The responsibilities of each consortium member are identified and clearly defined in the Perspective Plan.

### **Rural Telecentres**

Many villages in Sri Lanka have been equipped with ‘Nenasala’, ‘Vidatha’ and/or other outreach ICT centres. These centres serve as knowledge centres for the community. They are strategically located facilities providing public access in ICT based services and application. They are typically equipped with some combination of telecommunication services such as telephony, fax, email, internet; office equipment such as computers, CD-ROMs, photocopiers and multimedia hardware and software and meeting spaces for the community use. While facilities and usage vary across telecentres, all reflect the intention to address the issues by providing technology, developing human capacity and encouraging economic and social development. Modes of

*CS 6.9 Course design uses appropriate technology to engage and support learners and to provide communication facilities*

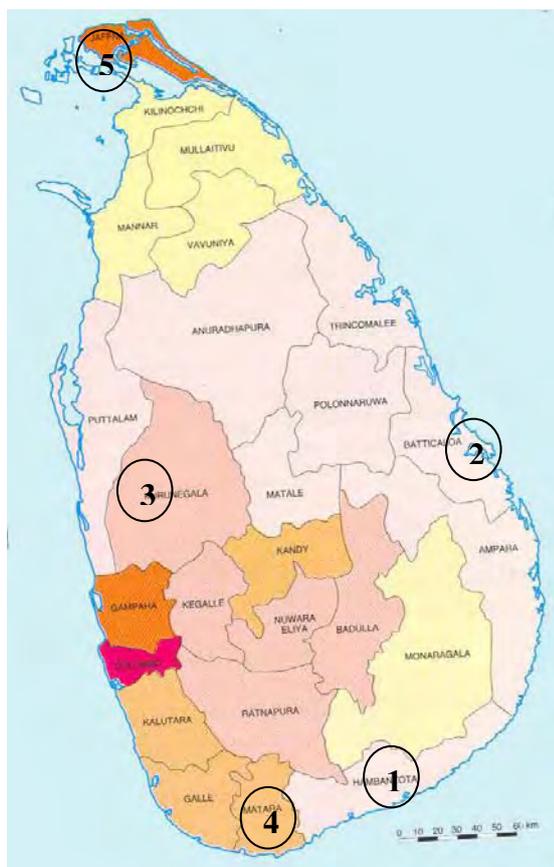
*CS 6.6 Instructional design takes diversity of learning contexts, learning styles and prior learning and experiences into account to enhance the opportunities for collaborative learning and ensure realistic scheduling of activities (PIs: 6.6.1, 6.6.3).*

learning combine face-to-face with other media such as text, video tapes, interactive CD-ROMs and internet where available. The learning process has been designed taking into consideration the needs of the different segments of the rural population. The rural community is motivated to develop personal-strategic learning processes.

### **Banks**

Banks form an important partner in that they provide credit to farmers through their associations, to increase their knowledge and agricultural productivity. The farmer associations are linked to the banks. Apart from the credit there is an unfulfilled demand for savings and insurance services to further stabilize the assets and income base of rural households.

The pilot phase is taking place in five villages spread across the country implemented by five national universities viz. University of Colombo, Eastern University, Ruhuna University, The Open University of Sri Lanka, University of Jaffna (Figure 3). The livelihood sources of the villages chosen by the universities are based on tissue culture banana cultivation, banana and vegetable cultivation, mushroom farming, cattle rearing and chillie cultivation respectively (Table 1).



1. University of Colombo
2. Eastern University
3. The Open University of Sri Lanka
4. Ruhuna University
5. Jaffna University

**Figure 3 – Geographical distribution of pilot initiatives and implementing universities.**

**Table 1 : Pilot Initiatives of L3 Farmers in Sri Lanka**

<b>Implementing University</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Livelihood source</b>
<b>PHASE I (2007)</b>			
University of Colombo – Institute of Agro Technology and Rural Sciences, Weligatte	Weligatte (1)*	Hambantota	Tissue culture banana and Mushroom farming
Eastern University	Kaluthavalai (2)*	Batticaloa	Vegetable cultivation and cattle rearing
<b>PHASE II (2008)</b>			
The Open University of Sri Lanka	Ambanpola (3)*	Kurunegala	Cattle rearing
University of Ruhuna	Kamburupitiya (4)*	Matara	Mushroom farming
University of Jaffna	Thinnaveli (5)*	Jaffna	Chillie cultivation

\* indicates location in Figure 3

Role of the implementing university includes:

- recognizing and promoting the concept and developing innovative approaches.
- providing stimulus and a forum for partner institutions of the consortium.
- building and strengthening partnership among various stakeholders.
- facilitating content development and/or sharing and translating experiences and wisdom of the community into distance learning content.
- motivating the rural community to develop personal strategic learning process.
- using a ‘results based management approach’ to implement, monitor and evaluate the programme regularly and dove tail the feedback.
- facilitate the pilot phase to transform into a self-sustaining programme.

Each university implements and monitors the project through

- regular Consortium meetings to monitor the progress of the project and give suitable directions to the Project Monitoring Group,
- regular Project Management Group meetings where progress is discussed and suitable corrective action is taken in case of any problem. The Project Management Group also monitors the fund flow according to the budget provided by the Perspective Plan and reports to the consortium on a monthly basis,
- review meetings of all stakeholders at village level,
- interactive meetings of consortium members and the village community and
- appropriate monitoring instruments.

*CS 5.13 Learner and associated stakeholder satisfaction with the quality of education and training provided is regularly evaluated and synthesized for continuous improvement*

## ***Resources***

It would not have been possible to establish the pilot initiatives of L3 Farmers Project in Sri Lanka if not for the collective common vision developed through lengthy participatory consultations between COL and a wide range of Sri Lankan professionals and policymakers. This strong foundation was laid through committed regular motivational, financial and intellectual inputs from the dedicated specialists in the Livelihood Sector Programmes at COL.

*CS 1.6 Relevant stakeholder groups are represented in the policy formulation process to ensure ownership and to facilitate feedback and openness (PI: 1.6.2).*

The Sri Lankan university system acted as an essential resource by contributing to the local and community development through pilot initiatives despite being under-resourced, and was prepared to look beyond the immediate self interest of teaching and research towards sharing facilities, energies, expertise and cultural ventures with the wider community of which they are a part.

*CS 10.7 Research, consultancy and extension services are actively promoted to build linkages with outreach for end users on farm and in industry (PIs:10.7.1, 10.7.2, 10.7.3)*

Motivated senior faculty members of the universities have contributed to the success of the initiatives by taking up the role of coordinators of L3 Farmers, championing the cause and the concept, facilitating effective implementation of community services and building and sustaining partnerships among various stakeholders.

Another important resource is the farming community (human capital) whose members recognize the value of the L3 Farmers Project and proactively demand high levels of knowledge and skills in Agrotechnology, entrepreneurship and ICT and are willing to learn and put into practice what they learn in order to achieve their vision.

*CS 3.7 The institution has a well-defined process for using knowledge about learners in policy formulation, programme and course development and the provision of learner support services (PIs: 3.7.1,*

Content development, production and delivery require expertise and specialists all of which are resource demanding and in short supply. Support institutions, particularly knowledge institutions and banks are important resources, who have been aggressively mobilized by the implementing university.

## ***Impacts/Outcomes***

Impacts/outcomes were measured against the COL's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for L3 Farmers Programme and the outcome indicators embodied in the Perspective Plan.

Introduced in July 2007 Weligatte pilot project has already demonstrated many positive outcomes.

- Knowledge and skills gained by the consortium of partners are contributing to improved socio-economy in the farming community.
- Through improved networking and communication among farmers and between farmers and support institutions, the community is gaining strength and confidence in assuming greater responsibility for planning and managing their own problems and creating a vision for their community development.
- Farmers who reveal capacity for developmental work and who understand the local needs and who could bring information direct to people in their community

to meet educational needs that are changing rapidly are emerging as ‘leaders’ and ‘facilitators’. Facilitating skills and leadership skills of these potential ‘leaders’ could be further enhanced and mentored to enable them to take the role of ‘knowledge infomediaries’ at the community level. A Diploma programme in Agrotechnology through ODL offered by the Institute of the University of Colombo and located in Weligatte targets the farmers. This would fulfill the demand for capacity building ‘knowledge info-mediaries’ among farmers and at other levels who could help in the horizontal and vertical transfer of agriculture related knowledge.

*CS 7.17 Mechanisms are in place to enable learners to acquire skills necessary to perform functions of knowledge info-mediaries (PI: 7.17.1).*

- Income generated by farmers has increased five-fold and this has a direct impact on their livelihoods.
- Employment opportunities of the village youth in the laboratories and fields have increased through empowerment of rural youth in entrepreneurship and technical skills in the field of biotechnology.
- There is a marked increase in demand for tissue culture banana plants across the country. Plant production has tripled.
- Improving culture of self reliance.
- Self-replication is beginning in two adjacent villages in Weligatte.
- The Government of Sri Lanka is recognizing L3 Farmers as a viable project that could complement the President’s ‘Gama Neguma’ (Prosperous Village) Programme.
- Increased adoption by policy makers (UGC) of ODL for improvement of livelihoods.
- Conventional universities adopting and increasing their capacity in ODL for expanding access to rural society and improving livelihoods.

**Constraints and possible solutions:**

- Cultural barriers, low income and lack of suitable facilities at village level for use of ICT – Appropriate learning media and mode to be chosen.
- Capacity to develop local-specific just-in-time information to farmers for their immediate use is very low – resources for extensive capacity building networks have to be sought.
- Universities under-resourced in infrastructure and human resources for technology mediated open and distance education – to be negotiated with policy makers.
- Lack of incentives and reward system in universities for involvement in extension and community services – to be negotiated with policy makers.

***Requirements for adoption and adaptation***

- The university that commits to engage and contribute to the local community outreach service functions should be willing to work in partnership collaboratively with all stakeholders and to re-orient themselves into learner-centred distance teaching/learning transactions to empower the community.
- Adoption/adaptation must be done on the basis of the needs of the farming community, the contextual requirements, and the suitability of technologies and

activities, with emphasis on building their capacity to 'gather' information and 'process it' into usable knowledge that can support them.

- A Pilot programme, using a participatory mode, has to be defined through stakeholder analysis, learner need analysis, identification of partners with their roles, methodology for social mobilisation, viability for different technology options, framework for credit and preparation of a perspective plan involving the farming community and all stakeholders.
- Effective implementation requires a willing and well oriented coordinator from the implementing university who is resourceful in mobilizing the community and learner support as required, competent to adapt to flexible modalities and sensitive to community needs and commitment.
- A learning resource centre in the village is critical so that distance is not an issue for learning. These centres may require a wide range of techniques, materials and experiences to engage farmers' interests and must maintain a constant search for alternate ways to enhance learning.
- A good business plan funded by a funding agency and private sector in the formative stage is critical although it should be self-supporting and financially sustainable in the longer term.
- An efficient operational and monitoring structure and mechanism should be well established to support the initiative. There should be a continuing process of monitoring, quality interventions and improvement.

### ***Acronyms***

ADB	Asian Development Bank
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
L3 Farmers	Lifelong Learning for Farmers
ODE	Open and Distance Education
ODL	Open and Distance Learning
OUSL	Open University of Sri Lanka
Tech-MODE	Technology-mediated Open and Distance Education
UGC	University Grants Commission

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## Case Study – 15

### **EMPOWERING CLUSTERS OF SMALL SCALE VEGETABLE PLANTERS TO MOVE TO THE PRODUCTION OF HIGH VALUE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS THROUGH THE COL LIFELONG LEARNING FOR FARMERS PROJECT**

*Krishnalall Coonjan; Naren Sukurdeep and Dhanraj Ramjutton*

#### ***Editor's Note***

*This case study on Learning for Livelihoods/; /experiences in Agriculture describes the application of COL's Lifelong Learning for Farmer's concept in empowering clusters of small scale planters to switch to the cultivation of high value added agricultural products in Mauritius. The good practices relate to Criterion 1- Vision, Mission and Planning, Criterion 3 – Learners, Criterion 6 – Course Design and Development, Criterion 10 – Research, Consultancy and Extension Services in Standards and Performance Indicators for Agriculture Education in Section 3. Criteria Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicator/s (PIs) are given within parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***Context***

Mauritius has come to the end of a sugar industry based economic cycle. In the sugar industry there are today some 26,000 small planters, 18,000 workers and 1,200 metayers who contribute to the industry. The sugar industry has suffered a severe impact of the 36 percent cut in the guaranteed price of sugar. Though there are plans to modernise the sugar industry into flexi-factories, small sugarcane planters may face difficulties because of the lack of economies of scale.

Planters, in general, have an individualist approach; they lack trust in each other resulting in lack of cooperation. The planters have poor networking amongst themselves and individually are unable to secure effective institutional support.

The level of education of the planters is in general very low, and the skills development is often limited. In particular, the level of IT skills is very low, if not absent. Since ICT equipment is lacking or absent for planters their communication is limited to face-to-face contacts.

There are more than 10 000 small-scale vegetable planters in Mauritius, growing non-sugarcane crops on plots of land that range from 0.2 to 0.3 hectares on average. The number of extension officers for crops and livestock extension is slightly more than 30, their scope of work has extended to cover training and support to set up MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises). The effective direct contact hours for extension are less than one hour per planter per year.

There is thus a heavy dependence of the planters on an extension and outreach service which is ineffective. The extension service is reliant on production-led research rather than market-led research. For their part, planters lack the capability to understand, develop and manage

their activities as a business enterprise and in particular, are unaware of the quality requirements of alternative markets, the techniques of new crops management and finance management.

The combined effect of the above factors clearly results in a lack of knowledge about markets, market needs and requirements, market opportunities, good agricultural practices and alternative crops & cropping systems; a consequence of which is that planters have developed low risk taking behaviours, lack of innovation in their products and processes due to an absence of investment in future developmental activities. The capability of planters in general to switch to new crops or cropping systems is very low.

In addition, the planters lack the confidence to negotiate with markets and banks for business development. They cannot invest and acquire new markets and are thus prone to the “exploitatory” nature of their current activity with middlemen.

Thus small-scale vegetable planters find themselves in a situation where they have low and fluctuating income and are not in a position to ensure a sustained development in future. It is very probable that many families growing vegetables on small scale face the risk of going out of business.

### ***Development of the Project***

Recent developments in Mauritius include the vision of making Mauritius a Cyber Island with nationwide access to ICT basic education and the commitment of the government to bridge the digital divide by putting in place various schemes related to making Mauritius an ICT and knowledge hub.

A situational analysis of the status of women in Mauritius in key sectors including the textile and sugar sector, shows a grim picture for the Mauritian women in employment and indicates that laid-off female workers stand weak chances of re-integrating into the world of work. The Government is urgently addressing the issue of women’s unemployment through empowerment and creation of opportunities

COL has developed a Framework for Lifelong Learning (L3) for Farmers and all other stakeholders in agriculture through the use of open and distance learning. The aim is to evolve a self-sustaining and self-replicating process in which rural communities together with knowledge institutions, financial institutions and markets mutually benefit from the potentials of knowledge empowerment. The learning process included use of information and communication technology based open and distance education - TECH-MODE learning (COL, 2005)

With its guiding principles, the 4Es, that is Empowerment through Education for Employment and Entrepreneurship Development, the NPCC, had an opportunity to play a key role in facilitating COL’s L3 farmers programme in Mauritius. COL partnered with the NPCC to evolve, on a pilot basis, perspectives for L3 in Mauritius for small scale vegetable growers in a particular region, namely Belle Mare. The broad objective is to improve the livelihood of the small scale planters of the selected region. It is also expected that the pilot project will lead to a self-sustainable, self-replicable and self-generative process and integrate within the national Empowerment Programme (EP).

<i>CS 1.13 The institution has a stated policy on partnerships and collaborations (PI: 1.13.1).</i>
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The pilot project selected one community with accessible ICT facilities in the region of Belle Mare, a region known for its specialised production of brinjal, chillies and onions “red onion mars”. The small scale vegetable growers including women are the primary stakeholders in the project. The COL Consultant and a dedicated facilitator from the NPCC function as the National Coordinator, are coordinating the programme with all the stakeholders implementing pilot initiatives. The local facilitator is also responsible for conceptualising the project and initiating linkages and partnerships at the national level.

*CS 1.5 The institution has systematic and transparent procedures for planning and development to achieve its stated objectives (PI: 1.5.1)*

### ***Description of the Project***

The overall objective of the project is to improve the livelihood of small-scale vegetable planters organised in clusters through improved income generation using Lifelong Learning (L3).

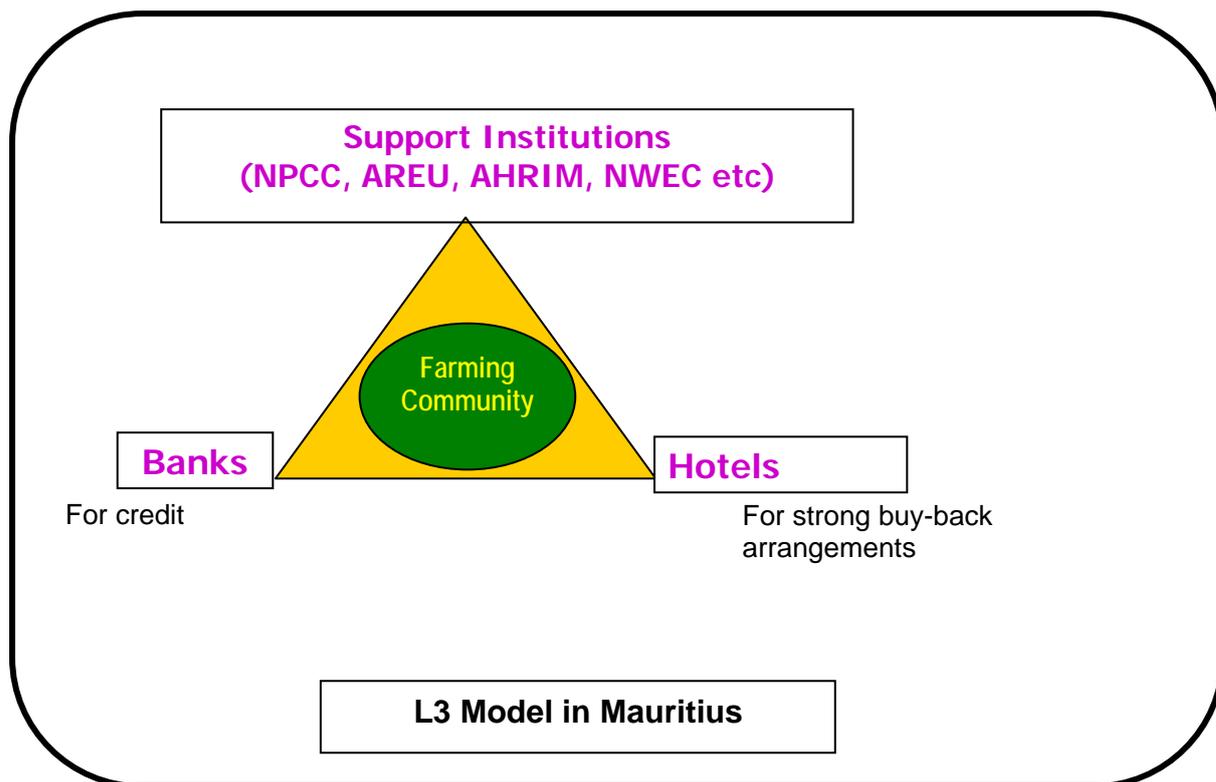
*The specific objectives are:*

- To promote sustained agro-based entrepreneurship among rural community;
- To facilitate the use of ICT in such a process through a system of ODL for skill and knowledge empowerment.
- To promote rural community – public – private – research and knowledge institution partnership (Consortia) in the development of business networks;
- To establish the project as a reference point (with reference to economic viability, financial feasibility, social acceptability and environment sustainability) and a self sustaining, self replicating programme.

The L3 Pilot project is based on the following components:

- Mobilisation of the community through the support of a facilitating agency
- Building community organisations
- Choosing and developing the appropriate business model
- Lifelong learning and capacity building (community skills development and knowledge empowerment through self-directed learning)
- Business management (building capacity and giving ownership to the core group).

The project involves four key partners: Farming Community, Hotels, Banks, and Support institutions (NPCC, AREU, NWEA etc). The Project offers a win-win situation for all stakeholders making it self-generating, self-sustaining and self-replicating.



### **Farming Community**

The NPCC has conducted a series of meetings with the planter community, and facilitated meetings between the planter community and the support institutions to raise awareness on the project. A core group which expressed interest was encouraged to set up a formal association and a Company has been registered as Belle Mare Farm Agro Company, with its own ICT facilities. Meetings were organised with the “Association des Hoteliers et Restaurants de l’Ile Maurice” (AHRIM) to discuss business opportunities between five star hotels and the planter community represented by the Company. Market buy-back arrangements have been secured and the Company is supplying vegetables from the Belle Mare planter community to the one of the five star hotels of the region. A rapid value premise analysis was conducted, and a survey of what the community can offer was also conducted.

The farmer associations are presented with several facilities offered by different banks and they are empowered to choose among the best options and to negotiate for better terms for loans.

The Company is now producing ODL materials, supported by the AREU and NPCC, to sensitise more planters from the community to develop business arrangements with a view of supplying the hotel with more high value crops grown under greenhouse conditions, while envisaging an expansion to other hotels in the region.

## Support Institutions

Support institutions facilitate the learning process of the farmers and give guidance about how to capture and use knowledge. The support institutions include experts in the field of agriculture, hotel and banking. Their role is to provide demand driven knowledge and skills to the farming community. A facilitator from the planter group has been selected and trained to operate digital cameras. Team-based sessions are organised with other planters in the community including women are sensitised, trained and encouraged to ask questions, clarifications, explanations and doubts concerning business and entrepreneurship, technology and skills, agriculture, animal husbandry, fishery, financial management, legal rights, health etc in subject matter of relevance to them. They are encouraged to interact with a team of subject experts. The questions are often in a visual form in which, wherever possible, the issues and problems are visually explained.

*CS 6.1 The courses are designed according to the stated programme objectives (PIs: 6.1.1, 6.1.2).*

*CS 6.2 Course design takes into consideration various delivery mechanisms and incorporates appropriate and contextualized ICT tools (PI: 6.2.2)*

The farmers are encouraged to capture all the learning events and these will be collected in a database to be shared among other learning community members. The database will be hosted on the web-server at NPCC initially. Farmers will be trained in basic ICT under the ELIT programme and internet facilities available at local post office. The post office will be also be used as a knowledge centre for farmers providing various telecommunication services. The farmers will be able to download the visuals collected on their digital cameras and either burn them on a CD-ROM or upload them on the web server of the NPCC. Based on their needs, farmers will also be able to retrieve saved documents and other relevant information from the learning space that will assist in solving their problems.

*CS 6.3 Courses are designed based on learner-centred principles that focus on the need for relevant knowledge and skills (PIs: 6.3.2,*

*CS 6.4 Courses have ample scope for encouraging and developing creative and critical thinking, independent and lifelong learning and interpersonal communication and team work skills and extend beyond the theoretical framework to provide opportunities to develop the skills required for research, innovation and outreach*

## Hotels

Linkages with Hotels will ensure strong buy-back arrangement for the farmers. With the Mauritian government planning to increase the number of tourists visiting the country to 2 million by the year 2010, there will be definitely an increase in demand for local varieties of agricultural produce. Encouraging Chefs to work together with farmers will ensure that there is adequate supply of high quality local agricultural products in hotels for meeting customer needs.

The NPCC has conducted a series of meetings with the different stakeholders (annex 4), the planter community, and facilitated meetings between the planting community and the support institutions to raise awareness on the project. A core group having shown interest was encouraged to set up a formal association and a Company has been registered as Belle Mare Farm Agro Company. Meetings were organised with the "Association des Hoteliers et Restaurants of Mauritius" (AHRIM) to discuss business opportunities between five star hotels and the planter community represented by the Company. Market buy-back arrangements have been secured and the Company is supplying vegetables from the Belle Mare planter community to the one of the five star hotel of the region. A rapid value premise analysis was conducted, and a survey of what the community can offer was also conducted.

## **Banks**

Banks form an important partner in this project. Banks normally do not provide credit to small farmers but the confidence of bankers in the project is higher when the farmers request a loan under a company or association and negotiate based on facts as well as experience while working with hotels.

The L3 is based on the premises that

- A strong social capital is an important pre-requisite for meaningful planter-planter and planter- institutions' cooperation and collaboration;
- If credit for associations or cooperatives or groups for entrepreneurship development is blended with appropriate capacity building and knowledge empowerment, the performance of credit will be much better vis-à-vis productivity, returns and non-performing assets (NPA) levels; implying that banks or credit offerings from schemes will require less stringent conditions and will be more accessible to small scale planters which under normal circumstance are very difficult to accede to even if available ;
- The buy-back arrangements will further strengthen the safety of credits;
- Capacity building will also enhance the development of business partnership potential between high-end markets and planters while enlarging the market for bank credit among women and among other marginalized section of the rural poor.

## ***Implementation and monitoring***

The pilot project has been implemented with guidance from COL consultants. The NPCC ensure that there are different stakeholder meetings for encouraging linkages with different institutions as well as to discuss about implementation of activities.

There are also regular internal project management group meetings involving the Executive Director of NPCC where progress is discussed and suitable corrective action is taken in case of any problem. The project management group also monitors the fund flow according to the budget provided by the Perspective plan.

*CS 5.13 Learner and associated stakeholder satisfaction with the quality of education and training provided is regularly evaluated and synthesized for continuous improvement (PIs: 5.13.1, 5.13.2, 5.13.3)*

Regular meetings are also conducted with farmers to work on issues and problems cropping up during implementation.

## ***Resources***

AREU is collaborating fully in providing expert knowledge as per the demand of farmers. Two ODL materials are being produced. NPCC is working on the required logistics to further train the farmers on ICT and creating the online database for farmers to upload their learning materials.

## ***Impacts/Outcomes***

The pilot project expects achieve the following outcomes:

- A strong cognitive social capital among a core group from the planter community emerges into a formal social capital structure example an Association or Company or a cooperative;
- Market Buy-Back Arrangement is secured between the formal structure (Association or Company or a cooperative) with Hotels in the region;
- Lifelong Learning (L3) on relevant emerging needs of the planter community is captured in ODL materials by the core group and used by the community;
- A cluster of small scale vegetable growers in the region of Belle Mare emerges as the L3 resources are used by the core group to sensitise and educate the broader base community on the benefits of working together;
- The Cluster operates on agreed terms and ensures sustained business growth through networking with hotels as high-end markets;
- Increase in overall turnover of all small-scale vegetable planters in the cluster.

## ***Requirements for adoption and adaptation***

### *Partnerships*

Partnerships are crucial to the success of the Mauritius project. Important partners in any similar project would be:

- The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) which plays a major role in providing technical expertise to the project has given its technical and field expertise. It has facilitated sharing of experiences by arranging site visits and meetings with L3 Farmers partners in India and Sri Lanka.
- Banks that could play a major role in providing credit to the farmers for establishing their business enterprises.
- Providers of accessible ICT facilities
- A knowledge provider to develop and host the ODL materials
- A locally based Agricultural Research and Extension Unit to provide the technical or knowledge part of the agricultural production side in particular on higher value agricultural products (HVAPs), good agricultural practices, technology options such as greenhouse crop production and management etc.
- Providers of affordable training in computer proficiency to address the need for basic IT skills.

### *Knowledge Infomediaries*

Lifelong learning among the key stakeholders should be an important focus of the capacity building process. The objective of the capacity building is to evolve a set of resource persons among the farming community (the Knowledge infomediaries) who would help in facilitation and strengthening the horizontal and vertical transfer of knowledge on markets, credit facilities, good crop practices, technology options in the building up of the cluster in the community and the business enterprise development and management.

### *Capacity building*

Initially, the project may aim at face-to-face intensive training programmes for developing entrepreneurship qualities among a core group from the community. Based on this intensive training programme, the group would be encouraged to set up the business enterprises. The Lifelong Learning (L3) concept in the form of self-directed personal strategic learning would follow after the establishment of the enterprises, using ICT based ODL to support the development of the business enterprises. The contents would be developed according to the needs identified for the target groups. Enhancing the capability of the planters in developing such ODL materials by themselves, through training, would be an ideal component of the empowerment process, starting from an assessment of their own needs for business growth, decision making and self-learning.

### *System for Self-Directed Learning*

One way of evolving personal-strategic learning could be through the ICT centres established by Mauritius Postal Offices or in any other office identified by the planters. During the project phase, at least one centre could be developed.

The project would provide digital cameras in this centre. A facilitator from the planter group will be selected and trained to operate digital cameras and video email processing. Through this centre, other planters in the community including women would be sensitised, trained and encouraged to ask questions, clarifications, explanations and doubts concerning employment, business and entrepreneurship, technology and skills, agriculture, animal husbandry, fishery, financial management, legal rights, health etc in subject matter of relevance to them.

The project should encourage interaction with a team of subject experts. The questions could be in a visual form in which, wherever possible, the issues and problems are visually explained. The facilitating agency would initially maintain a database of all the questions and answers and allow the members of the community to refer to the database as and when they want. In the course of implementing the project, other innovative methods of promoting self-directed learning could be evolved.

### **Acronyms**

AREU	Agricultural Research and Extension Unit
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
ELIT	English Literacy using Information Technology
FSC	Farmers' Service Centre
HVAP	High Value Agricultural Products
MPL	Mauritius Post Limited
NCB	National Computer Board
NPCC	National Productivity and Competitiveness Council
AHRIM	Association of Hotels and Restaurants of Mauritius
SPWF	Small Planters Welfare Fund

## Case Study – 16

### COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS IN RURAL PAPUA NEW GUINEA

*A Ramakrishna*

#### ***Editor's note***

*This case study on learning for livelihoods – experience in agriculture deals with community empowerment in rural Papua New Guinea. It describes how the sustainable livelihoods approach has been used to promote economic efficiency, social equity, ecological integrity and resilience. Good practices relate to Criterion 5 – Programme design and development, Criterion 9 – Learning, infrastructure and resources and Criterion 10 – Research, Consultancy and Extension services. Agriculture Performance Indicators at Section 3. Criteria Standard (CS) is boxed and Performance Indicator/s (PIs) are given within parenthesis within the box against the specific practice in the case study.*

#### ***Context***

Papua New Guinea's (PNG) population is 5.5 million (2000 census) and agriculture is the lifeline for 85% of this population. Most people live in rural areas and about 95% of them are small holder farmers with activities ranging from subsistence to semi-commercial to fully commercial ( Gwaiseuk, 2001). Small holder agriculture provides the bulk of the nation's fresh food and is a major source of income and employment. Yet income from agriculture is low as a result of low productivity, inefficient markets, high transaction costs and low producer prices. These factors result in low returns to household assets that translate into low farm incomes (Gibson, 2001). Agricultural research in PNG (like most of the Pacific and Sub-Saharan Africa) has so far had a much lower impact than expected.

There are multiple reasons for this, the main ones being (i) the incomplete understanding by researchers of farmers' priorities and strategies; (ii) weakness of extension services and incomplete exchange mechanisms between farmers-development-research and extension; (iii) thematic research promoting single technologies or semi-finished research products; (iv) insufficient efforts given to integrative and interactive research with a strong socio-economic component; (v) the complexity of heterogeneity of PNG production systems. Many of the research/development actors are now well aware of these and a new dynamics is growing. Research priorities have been revisited to give more importance to integrative, participative and systems research, and to capitalize on past research results through community empowerment and sustainable livelihoods approach (Lele,1991).

#### ***Development of the practice***

Empowerment is the process by which people in general, and poorer segments in particular, acquire the capacity to understand, analyze and effectively respond to situations affecting their lives and livelihoods (Narayan, Deepa, ed. 2002). Enabling people to work towards their own development is a part of the process of community empowerment. Using participatory approaches can help them identify new ways of finding solutions to their problems. As groups of people begin to realize that there are ways in which their efforts can

make a difference, they feel more powerful and are better able to contribute to the development process.

The sustainable livelihoods (SL) approach is different from other approaches that examine poverty by conducting a community needs assessment. The SL approach begins with an analysis of the “wealth” of the poor. This wealth may reveal itself through various kinds of assets, the knowledge, skills, resourcefulness, and adaptive strategies that have enabled the poor to survive over the years, often against terrible odds. Adaptive strategies—the changes and adjustments people make in their livelihoods systems in order to cope under difficult circumstances – serve as the entry point of the SL approach (Chambers and Conway, 1992).

The adaptive strategies and the livelihoods should be sustainable in the sense that they are economically efficient, do not consume resources that will be needed for the future, and do not infringe on or disrupt the options of others to make their own livelihood. However, as with most adaptive strategies, they are dynamic and there is room for improvement. A basic tenet of the SL approach is that most adaptive strategies can be made more productive and more sustainable with the application of a little contemporary knowledge, technology, financial services, or improvements in government policies. SL is the means by which the external can be married to the local, and outsiders can make sustainable contributions to people’s livelihoods.

A key feature of the SL approach is the recognition that the root of all human development and economic growth is livelihoods--- not jobs per se, but the wide, infinitely diverse range of activities people engage in to make their living. These activities are made up of more than jobs (or variations thereof) or economic activities. In addition to activities, livelihoods consist of assets—human capital (such as knowledge, skills, creativity, adaptive strategies); physical capital (such as buildings, roads, machinery, crops/livestock); natural capital (such as land/soil, air, water, biodiversity); and social capital (such as governance structures, decision-making power, community groups, and culture). Livelihoods also depend on entitlements, such as the support of family or clan members that can be called upon in an emergency.

Everyone’s livelihood, however meagre, is made up of these three components—activities, assets, and entitlements—together with the short-term coping mechanisms and long-term adaptive strategies that the person employs in times of crisis so that in adjusting to hardship, loss, and change, he or she can maintain a livelihood.

Understanding the current livelihood activities, assets, and entitlements of a community or individual naturally provides the best guide to understanding how their livelihoods can be made more productive and more sustainable. Sometimes an economic activity needs support. Sometimes entitlements in the form of government support can be expanded, such as technical assistance from extension workers. In all these cases, helping to enhance existing livelihoods is the key to igniting a self-propelled engine of sustainable, human-centered development.

*CS 10.2 Findings of research underpin the development of the programmes and the courses of the institution (PIs:10.2.1, 10.2.2).*

## ***Key Themes***

The SL approach in PNG is designed to promote four essential characteristics: economic efficiency, social equity, ecological integrity, and resilience.

### ***Economic efficiency***

To be sustainable, a livelihood system must be economically efficient, rather than wasteful, in its use of resources. For example, the organic mini-farm (1000 sq m) concept promoted in the Highlands and Morobe province by NARI is typical of the extraordinarily productive and efficient household farms that are proliferating in PNG. The household would have starved with the meagre income with traditional sweet potato cultivation; instead they enjoy an abundant variety of foods grown organically on their farm. In addition to poultry, pigs, wood, mutton, the farm-cum-orchard produces an assortment of rice, corn, peanuts, vegetables and fruits. The land is being cultivated intensively. Careful crop rotation prevents diseases and maintains soil productivity. Many resources are used more than once. Crop waste and by-products for example, provide food for the livestock, which in turn, provide manure, or natural fertilizer, for the farm. Firewood used for heating and cooking is converted to ash that is also used enrich the soil. All the fertilizer used is therefore organic, contributed either by animals as manure or in the form of ash and agricultural wastes.

*CS 10.7 Research, consultancy and extension services are actively promoted to build linkages with outreach for end users on farm and in industry (PI: 10.7.2).*

*CS 10.8 Mechanisms are in place to identify, facilitate and support areas of research that require multi-disciplinary approach and/or public-private-community partnerships (PI:*

### ***Social equity***

To be sustainable, livelihoods must adhere to the precepts of social equity; that is, the way one household or community makes its livelihood must not disrupt options for other to make theirs. Whenever possible, one form of livelihood should enhance other livelihoods, as in relationships of trade, exchange, and services. Such social equity and community loyalty are also exemplified by the peanut growers (women and youth associations) NARI is working with in the Eastern Highlands and Morobe provinces. The women and youth associations prefer to sell their produce to the village cooperative for K 5 per kilogram rather than K 8-10 in the local market. This gesture is greatly helping the spread of improved varieties and production technologies advocated by NARI in the village and community and reflecting their society's belief that being a part of a trust network is important.

### ***Ecological integrity***

Human activities result in many environmental changes that enhance some species, ecosystems, and ecological processes, while at the same time causing important damage to others (Ashley, 2000). Large changes in the intensity of environmental stress result in various types of ecological response. For example, when an ecosystem is disrupted by an intense disturbance, there may be substantial mortality of its species and other damage, followed by recovery through succession. In contrast, a longer-term intensification of environmental stress, possibly associated with chronic pollution or climate change, causes more permanent ecological adjustments to occur (Bernstein, Crow and Johnson, 1992). Relatively vulnerable species are reduced in abundance or eliminated from sites that are

stressed over the longer term, and their modified niches are assumed by organisms that are more tolerant. Other common responses include a simplification of species richness, and decreased rates of productivity, decomposition, nutrient cycling. These changes represent an ecological conversion, or a longer-term change in the character of the ecosystem.

To be sustainable, livelihood systems must obey the laws of ecological integrity, preserving or restoring resources for use by future generations. The way people make their livelihoods must not destroy the resource base. Livelihoods do consume resources, but they must live off the interest and not exhaust the capital. The alarming rate of forest destruction in PNG and elsewhere in the humid tropics is a tragic example of how the poor are being forced to live off the capital of one of earth's most precious resources (Bailey, Ramakrishna and Kirchhof, 2008). NARI is working closely with the communities in the highlands provinces of Enga, Western highlands, Simbu and Eastern Highlands to deter the communities from the traditional shifting cultivation and forest clearing for extended areas for cultivation. Technical advice on soil and water management, crop diversification, intensification and land use has helped the rural communities to address the problems of declining soil fertility and productivity losses effectively.

### ***Resilience***

Finally, to be sustainable, livelihood systems must be resilient. They must be able to cope with, and recover from, shocks and stresses. They must be flexible enough, and the people involved in them resilient and resourceful enough, to employ effective mechanisms for surviving in times of crisis. For example, the innovative drought coping strategies developed by NARI proved to be quite effective with the rural communities in PNG. When the coping mechanisms prove effective enough to be employed over an extended period of time, as previously mentioned, they become what the SL paradigm calls adaptive strategies.

### ***Description of the Practice***

#### **Establishment of Demonstration farms on New Technology**

Training and technical support for farmers' groups have helped farmers establish their own demonstration farms and serve as an example and model for other farmer's groups. Farmer's field school methods are used and farmers learn by-doing. Community contacts are used to establish demonstration farms for other key commodities like peanut, corn and sweet potato by women farmers with an aim to develop agribusiness, and provide training to women through learning-by- doing. Training is given in production methods using new technology, and in small agribusiness development and management. ICT is used for the development of media or extension materials in Pidgin targeting small-holder subsistence farmers.

*CS 9.6 The institution uses technology as a learning resource and manages its activities in a technology enabled way (PI:9.6.1).*

*CS9.7 There is wide distribution of services and knowledge sharing through outreach centres to ensure equity and access (PI: 9.7.1).*

#### **Improving Vegetable production**

In house and on-farm training courses for farmers and women's groups are organized periodically on modern vegetable production, organic farming, integrated pest and disease management, post harvest handling, food processing and preservation and management of agribusiness. Following training, farmers benefit from access to credit for inputs from rural banks.

### **Better practice in Rice Farming & Profitable Farm Management Skills**

The demonstration farms illustrate better practices for planting and water management using NARI rice varieties. Technical assistance and training is provided by the Wet Low Land Mainland Program of the National Agricultural Research Institute at Bubia. The farmers are linked to microfinance to encourage large scale production of rice.

### **Women in Agriculture**

Women's role in agriculture in PNG is increasing as male family members migrate to urban employment opportunities and trading. Through divorce, widowhood due to HIV & AIDS and abandonment, there are a growing number of women-headed households in rural PNG, and women are taking a greater role in the economic support of their families. Thus women need to have equal access and control over resources, and to support services, including information, extension services, material support, and credit. Therefore, the empowerment of women is being given priority. Simple audio visual materials about profitable, sustainable agricultural products are being produced.

*CS 5.10 Programme design and development pays attention to gender equity, multiculturalism, social justice and cohesion, ethical values and environmental sustainability (PIs: 5.10.1,*

### **Conducting Farmers Field Schools**

Farmers' training has been important part of NARI's technology development and dissemination program. Training has been provided for (i) land rehabilitation, (ii) intensive cultivation of rice, corn, peanuts, soybean and horticultural crops, (iii) Integrated Pest Management, (iv) Livestock for agribusiness development-- goats, sheep, and poultry (v) Soil fertility management, and (vi) drought coping strategies. Special training programs are designed for women farmers to overcome cultural resistance. Audio-visual media in local language with focus on women farmers are being planned.

### **Establishment of Multifunctional Centres (Resource Centres)**

The resource centre is a combination of facilities and functions as a livelihood connection centre to be used by farmers in order to provide them with comprehensive facilities for learning and sharing experience for improving their skills and knowledge of the farming programmes in the area. Information and Liaison staff of NARI and extension staff provide the technical support and supervision for implementation of trials by learning-by-doing. The information services system will have three primary areas of information: 1. Baseline data and maps; 2. Technical guidelines, A/V presentations, Newsletters and photos library; 3. Market, microfinance services and supplier contract information and general micro enterprise development. The content includes market pricing information, technical guidance, and supplier information that can significantly improve the production capacity and livelihood of farmers. The RC will also be used by the farmers from the district as well as from its neighbouring areas and as the district meeting place as shown in the figure below.

*CS 10.7 Research, consultancy and extension services are actively promoted to build linkages with outreach for end users on farm and in industry (PIs: 10.7.2, 10.7.3).*



## ***Resources***

The National Agricultural Research Institute contributed to the local and community development through pilot initiatives and was prepared to look beyond the core responsibility of research by sharing facilities, staff, and expertise with the wider community. Motivated senior staff members and information and outreach officers have taken up the role of coordinators to empower the communities for improved livelihoods. Building social networks and sustaining partnerships among various stakeholders have contributed immensely to the success of the initiatives.

The farming communities have recognized the value of empowerment and are proactive in demanding high levels of knowledge and skills in improved agro-technologies, post-harvest and value addition, entrepreneurship and ICT and are willing to learn and put into practice what they learn in order to achieve their vision.

Nevertheless, effective content development, production and delivery require expertise and specialists together with resources (both human and capital). Help is sought within the institute to meet immediate demands while plans are being developed to link with support institutions, particularly with knowledge institutions, social and community organizations, rural banks and provincial government support.

## ***Impacts/Out comes***

Demonstration farms and farmers' field schools have enabled farmers to learn by doing, improve farming practices and production and gain access to credit from banks.

Women farmers have been empowered to fulfil their emerging role as head of farming households.

Continuing support for further learning and social network development is provided through the resource centres, thus promoting sustainability.

### ***Requirements for adoption and adaptation***

To make farming a business, today's farmers need to revolutionise their farming methods and substantially improve their technical knowledge and skills in the food – market chain. The nature, scale, urgency and the extent of learning and skills required by farmers to face today's challenges cannot be met by the conventional extension methods. The rural communities' needs for quality assured just-in-time information, learning, motivation, organisation, resources and training are to be addressed by innovative approaches, integrating with modern Information Communication Technologies (ICT) and Open and Distance Education (ODE). Government's Sustainable Livelihood Development Programme focuses on rural credit, extension and self-employment generating agro-industries.

Knowledge institutions and community and social organizations committing to engage and contribute to the local community outreach service functions should be willing to work in partnership collaboratively with all stakeholders and to re-orient themselves into learner-centred distance teaching/learning transactions for empowering of community.

Development of technologies and their adoption and adaptation should done on the basis of the needs of farming community and contextual requirements, with emphasis on building community capacity to 'gather' information and 'process it' into usable knowledge that can support them.

Pilot programs, using a participatory mode, should be developed through stakeholder analysis, learner need analysis, identification of partners with their roles, methodology for social mobilisation, viability for different technology options, framework for credit and preparation of a perspective plan involving the farming community and all stakeholders .

A resource centre in each province/district is critical so that distance is not an issue for learning. These centres may require a wide range of techniques, materials and experiences to engage farmers' interests and needs to maintain a constant search for alternate ways to enhance learning. An efficient operational and monitoring structure and mechanism should be well established to support the initiative.

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## Section IV

# APPENDICES



## Appendix 1

### GLOSSARY

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Academic Calendar	the schedule of the institution for the academic year giving details like dates of reopening and closing, holidays, exams, results, convocation, etc.
Access	the arrangements that an educational or training system makes with respect to entry requirements (exam qualifications, etc.) so as to offer entry opportunities for a much wider range of applicants than was traditionally the case.
Accountability	the obligation to demonstrate and take responsibility for performance in the light of agreed expectations.
Accreditation	certification of an academic institution by a recognized national or regional body or agency with reference to quality provision that is valid for a fixed period.
Accrediting Agency	an organisation or association with authority to certify the quality of the educational provision of an institution and of individual programmes.
Action plan	description of specific activities that respond to short and longer term strategic objectives. The plan includes outcomes and outputs along with detailed roadmap and planned milestones. It also details resource commitments and time horizons required for the accomplishment of the plan.
Active Learning	interactive instructional techniques that engage students in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, evaluation and reflection. Students engaged in active learning might use resources beyond the faculty, such as libraries, Web sites, interviews and/or focus groups, to obtain information. They may demonstrate their abilities to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate through projects, presentations, experiments, simulations, internships, practicum, independent study projects, peer teaching, role playing, or written documents. <sup>1</sup>
Advance Organiser	A calendar of key dates provided at the beginning of a piece of instructional material to give learners a general idea of what is to follow and to help them to organize their learning
Advocacy	the practice of supporting an individual or group to make their voice heard.
Affirmative action	policies and practices intended to promote access to education and employment and to redress the negative effects of discrimination which resulted in exclusion of certain communities' participation in the developmental process. This sometimes involves preferential treatment to candidates from the underprivileged communities such as relaxation of qualifications, financial subsidies etc.

<sup>1</sup> Baldrige National Quality Program- Education Criteria for Performance Excellence ( 2005) . Web site : [www.baldrige.nist.gov](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov)

Anchored (learning activities) (see also Authentic)	Activities that are clearly related to a particular ‘real life’ context
Appeal Mechanism	documented procedures for dealing with challenges to a rule or decision, or for reviewing a judgement or decision made on behalf of the institution. This also includes the constitution, roles, responsibilities and ethical practices of the committees or authority established for the purpose.
Assessment	an integrated set of evaluation measures including both formative and summative components (see ‘formative assessment’ and ‘summative assessment’ below) that monitors and measures student performance in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes.
Assignments	work submitted by learners during a course at pre-determined intervals and according to defined criteria in fulfillment of assessment requirements. Assignments may be computer-marked or tutor marked. Assignment marking gives tutors the opportunity to evaluate learner performance and provide personalised written feedback.
Audit	on-site verification activity, such as inspection or review, of a process or quality system, to ensure compliance to requirements.
Authentic (learning activities/assessment tasks)	Activities/tasks designed to replicate the features of a ‘real life’ situation.
Award	a certificate or title conferred by an academic institution signifying that the recipient has successfully completed a prescribed course of study.
Benchmarking	a benchmark is an example of good performance that serves as a standard for comparison of one’s own performance. Benchmarking is a technique in which an institution measures its performance against that of the best of others, making reference to how those institutions achieved the ‘benchmark’ levels, and uses that information to improve its own performance.
Beneficiaries	anyone who benefits from a particular action. In the case of an ODL course this may include learners, employers, the community etc.
Bridging course ( Bridge course)	a course designed for learners who have difficulty in coping with the transition to a higher level of study. The bridging course is often of a short duration and is intended to bridge the gap between an existing level of competence and the level required for effective study at the higher level.
Certification	the process of granting recognition to a learner who has satisfied the predetermined criteria set by an authorized awarding body.
Code of conduct	expectations of behaviour mutually agreed upon by the institution and its constituent members.
Collaboration	the process by which people/organisations work together to accomplish a common mission.
Collaborative Learning	when learners work in groups on the same task simultaneously, thinking over demands and tackling complexities. Within the context of electronic communication, collaborative learning

	can take place without members being physically in the same location. <sup>2</sup>
Community engagement	developing and sustaining a working relationship between an institution and one or more community groups to help them both to understand and act on the needs and issues that the community experiences.
Completion rates (course/programme)	the ratio of the total number of learners successfully completing a course/ graduating from a programme in a given year to the total number of learners who initially enrolled on the course/programme.
Compliance	a state of being in accordance with established guidelines, specifications, requirements or legislation.
Counselling	the provision of academic, personal and emotional support and guidance to learners.
Course development	a specified and quality assured process that combines the elements of course formulation and approval, academic content writing, assessment design, instructional design, integration of media content, media production and course materials production.
Course materials	materials in print or electronic format which are provided to the learner to support the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
Credit	a unit used in the calculation of the value of the courses taken by a learner. A learner accumulates credits by passing courses. A pre-determined number of credits is required for an award. The value of a credit is normally determined by the number of notional learning hours required to complete it.
Credit Transfer	the ability to transport credits (for learning) from one setting to another. This not only facilitates smooth transfer of learners from one programme to another and one institution to another but also enables transnational mobility.
Curriculum	the total planned structure of knowledge and skills and educational experiences that make up a programme of study and enable the learners to achieve the intended learning outcomes.
Database	a collection of data fundamental to an operation, organized in some pre-defined structure; typically held on a computer
Disabled learners	learners who have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
(Academic) Discipline	a branch of knowledge or learning which is taught or researched at the college or university level.
Distance Education	an educational process and system in which all or a significant proportion of the teaching is carried out by someone or something removed in space and time from the learner. Distance education requires structured planning, well-designed courses, special instructional techniques and methods of

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO <http://www.unesco.org/education/educprog/lwf/doc/portfolio/definitions.htm>

	communication by electronic and other technology, as well as specific organisational and administrative arrangements. <sup>3</sup>
Distance Learning	a system and a process that connects learners to distributed learning resources. Distance learning can take a variety of forms. All distance learning, however, is characterized by a) separation/distance of place and/or time between instructor and learner, amongst learners, and/or between learners and learning resources; and b) interaction between the learner and instructor, among learners and/or between learners and learning resources conducted through one or more media. <sup>4</sup>
Diversity	differences among people and individuals based on caste, creed, geographies, colour, ethnicity, race, socio-economic status, gender, learning abilities etc.
Dual mode institution	an institution that offers learning opportunities in two modes: one using traditional classroom-based methods, the other using distance methods
Educational Technology	the use of technology to improve teaching and learning
Elective courses	a range of courses not specified in programme completion requirements from which learners may select in accordance with their own preference and learning and career goals
Electronic media	media that utilize electronic or electromechanical devices to enable the end user to access the content. Includes video recordings, audio recordings, multimedia presentations, slide presentations, CD-ROM and online content. Excludes print media which may be produced electronically but do not require electronics to be accessed by the end user.
Equity	an educational and learning environment in which individuals can consider options and make choices throughout their lives based on their abilities and talents, not on the basis of stereotypes, biased expectations or discrimination. The achievement of educational equity enables females and males of all races and ethnic backgrounds to develop skills needed to be productive, empowered citizens. It opens economic and social opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity, race or social status.
Ethics	the practice of applying a code of conduct based on moral principles to the day-to-day actions of individuals or groups within an organisation.
Evaluation	a series of activities, based on stakeholder feedback and quantitative analysis, designed to measure the effectiveness of a course, instructional programme, institution etc.
Experiential learning	learning acquired through workplace or other previous experience.
Extension (services, programmes)	an educational opportunity provided by colleges and universities to people who are not enrolled as regular students.
Face to Face interaction	interaction between two individuals or groups in the same physical space.

<sup>3</sup> UNESCO (ibid)

<sup>4</sup> UNESCO (ibid)

Feedback	<p>a) formative and evaluative comments made to individual learners by their tutors in response to written assignments.</p> <p>b) evaluative comments made by stakeholders to the institution on the quality and effectiveness of a defined process.</p>
Feedback mechanism	systems for obtaining information from participants in a process that contributes to the assessment of its quality and effectiveness and may trigger adjustments.
Formative assessment	the evaluation of learning that is carried out as the learning activities of a course progress.
Formative evaluation	the assessment of learning that occurs as a project or course is in progress, with the aim of identifying problems and addressing them immediately.
Generic skills	<p>skills that are fundamental to a class of activities and are transferable from one job or activity to another. Lists of generic skills usually include the following categories:</p> <p>Basic/fundamental skills—such as literacy, using numbers, using technology</p> <p>People-related skills—such as communication, interpersonal, teamwork, customer-service skills</p> <p>Conceptual/thinking skills—such as collecting and organising information, problem-solving, planning and organising, learning-to-learn skills, thinking innovatively and creatively, systems thinking</p> <p>Personal skills and attributes—such as being responsible, resourceful, flexible, able to manage own time, having self-esteem</p> <p>Skills related to the business world—such as innovation skills, enterprise skills</p> <p>Skills related to the community—such as civic or citizenship knowledge and skills.<sup>5</sup></p>
Goal	a result, milestone or checkpoint in the future which will indicate significant progress towards achieving the institutional mission. A goal should be specific, measurable, critical for success and benchmarked. <sup>6</sup>
Governance structure	the system and structure for defining policy, providing leadership, managing and coordinating the procedures and resources that ensure the quality of all the activities of the organisations. ( NCATE Standards – <a href="http://www.cqaie.org">http://www.cqaie.org</a> )
Grievance redressal	mechanisms for receiving , processing and addressing dissatisfaction expressed, complaints and other formal requests made by learners, staff and other stakeholders on the institutional provisions promised and perceived.
Horizontal mobility	the opportunity for learners to move within and across disciplines for additional learning within the same level of education. Also see vertical mobility.

<sup>5</sup> Australian National Training Authority (2003) <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nr2102b.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Oakland John S. and Porter Les. (1994) *Cases in Total Quality Management*

Inclusiveness	<p>the process by which all those who provide education develop their cultures, policies and practices so as to include all learners. Educationally inclusive institutions are ones in which the learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of all learners matter. This involves taking account of learners' varied life experiences and needs.</p> <p>Educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnic origin, religious belief, care status, impairment, sexuality, attainment or social or economic background. It pays particular attention to the provision made for, and the achievement of, different groups of learners.</p> <p>It is about tackling the underachievement and exclusion of groups who have been marginalized or disadvantaged in the past, through taking positive action and through the targeting of resources to ensure that they have their rights upheld.<sup>7</sup></p>
Independent study	a mode of learning in which learners work through their study materials independently of other learners.
Induction session (see also Orientation)	introductory information session for new entrants to the various provisions of the institution.
ICTs (see also new technologies)	Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) consist of the hardware, software, networks and media for the collection, storage, processing, transmission and presentation of information (voice, data, text, images) as well as related services. <sup>8</sup>
Innovation	using new knowledge and understanding to experiment with new possibilities in order to implement new concepts that create new value.
Institutional research	the collection, analysis, reporting and warehousing of quantitative and qualitative data about an institution's students, faculty, staff, curriculum, course offerings and learning outcomes to inform institutional decision-making and planning.
Instructional design	a process of designing instructional materials in a way that helps learners to learn effectively.
Instructional Package	All essential study materials for a course
Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)	temporary grants of monopoly intended to give economic incentives for innovative and creative activity. IPR exist in the form of patents, copyrights and trademarks.
Interactive learning	learning that results from the two-way communication between tutor and learner, between learners and between the learner and the learning materials. The interactivity of the learning can be assessed in terms of the learner's interaction with the medium of delivery, the level and immediacy of the feedback the medium itself provides, the extent to which the medium will

<sup>7</sup> Bristol L.A. <http://www.bristol-cyps.org.uk/services/eit/definitions.html>

<sup>8</sup> World Bank

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTEDUCATION/0,,contentMDK:2>

	accommodate the learner's own input and direction and the extent to which learners interact with the tutor and with each other via a given medium. <sup>9</sup>
Interdisciplinary study	an integrative approach in which information from more than one discipline is used in interpreting the content of a subject, phenomenon, theory or principle.
Knowledge Info-mediaries	Persons who could mediate in sharing information and facilitating creation of knowledge (in agriculture they could be farmers themselves, community workers, extension workers, teachers, ICT centre operators, etc.)
Learner-centred education	learner-centered education places the learner at the centre of education. It begins with understanding the educational context from which a learner comes. It continues with the instructor evaluating the learner's progress towards the achievement of negotiated learning outcomes. By helping the student acquire the basic skills to learn, it ultimately provides a basis for learning throughout life. This approach strives to be individualistic, flexible, competency-based, varied in methodology and not always constrained by time or place. <sup>10</sup>
Learner profile	A description of an average potential learner or group of learners based upon knowledge of appropriate learner characteristics
Learner support services	physical and academic facilities made available to learners to enable every individual to achieve the stated learning outcomes and optimize his/her learning. They may include online support, tutor support, library and information services, laboratories, administrative support for admission, assignments, examinations etc.
Learning centres	(also known as Access centres, Outreach centres or Regional centres); offices or buildings maintained by open and distance learning programmes in order to provide localized delivery of learning materials and support to learners.
Learning environment	the place and setting where learning occurs. A virtual learning environment is one in which a student is provided with tools and resources to learn both autonomously and with a virtual cohort of learners.
Learning outcomes	statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to do at the end of a period of learning.
Learning Portfolio	A representative collection of a student's work that promotes self-assessment, awareness and continuous improvement.
Lifelong learning skills	knowledge and skills which improve learners' competence at the time of learning and facilitate continuous learning throughout life.
Livelihood	the application of knowledge and skills that will help an individual to boost his/her self-esteem and eventually achieve a better quality of life
Management Information System (MIS)	a computerized integrated information collection and analysis system to support institutional decision making

<sup>9</sup> COL Glossary of ODL terms [www.col.org/colweb/site/pid/3128](http://www.col.org/colweb/site/pid/3128)

<sup>10</sup> Arizona Faculties Council (2000) Definition of Learner Centred Education  
[http://www.abor.asu.edu/4\\_special\\_programs/lce/afc-defined\\_lce.htm](http://www.abor.asu.edu/4_special_programs/lce/afc-defined_lce.htm)

Market research	activities undertaken by an institution to determine the demand for its programmes and services and the features in similar programmes and services that its potential customers prefer.
Marking scheme	a set of criteria used in assessing student learning.
Mission	the overall function or purpose of an institution.
Mobile/cell(ular) phone	A portable telephone that connects to the telephone network over radio wave transmission.
Monitoring	a management function that operates during programme implementation to carry out an on-going assessment or appraisal of a system while it is in operation with a view to correcting problems as they arise.
Multimedia	learning technologies that involve the whole range of audio, visual, text and graphics media available, integrated into a package that has been effectively designed from an instructional perspective. <sup>11</sup>
Network	any system consisting of a number of physically separated but inter-connected sub-systems. It may be applied to computers, radio or TV stations, agencies, institutions as well as to people with shared interests.
New Technologies	digital tools and resources (hardware and software) and their application in the field of education.
Objectives	(see also learning outcomes) In the context of teaching and learning, a specific statement about what the learner will be able to do when a learning activity is complete, the conditions under which learners will demonstrate their competency and the way in which this competency will be measured <sup>12</sup> .
Open access	a way of providing learning opportunities that implies a lack of formal entry requirements, prerequisite credentials or an entrance examination. <sup>13</sup>
Open learning	an educational philosophy that also emphasizes giving learners choices about media, place of study, support mechanisms and entry and exit points. <sup>14</sup>
Open and Distance Learning	a way of providing learning opportunities that is characterized by the separation of teacher and learner in time and/or place; learning that is certified in some way by an institution or agency; the use of a variety of media, including print and electronic; two-way communications that allow learners and tutors to interact; the possibility of occasional face to face meetings between tutor and learners; and a specialized division of labour in the production and delivery of courses. <sup>15</sup>
Open educational resources	educational materials and resources offered freely and openly for anyone to use and under some licenses to re-mix, improve and redistribute.
Open source software	a licensing model for software that gives free access to the source code of the software to allow interested parties to modify or contribute to the software as they see fit.

<sup>11</sup> COL ibid

<sup>12</sup> COL ibid

<sup>13</sup> COL ibid

<sup>14</sup> COL ibid

<sup>15</sup> COL ibid

Organisational structure	the form of an organisation that is evident in the way that divisions, departments, functions and people link together and interact. It reveals vertical responsibilities and horizontal linkages and may be represented by an organisation chart. (see organogram)
Organogram	a diagram that shows the structure of an organisation and the relationships and relative ranks of its parts and positions/jobs.
Orientation	a process through which a new student or employee is integrated into an institution, learning about its culture, policies and procedures, and the specific practicalities of his or her programme of study or job.
Outreach	the provision of programmes, services, activities and /or expertise to those outside the traditional university community. Outreach is a one-way process in which the university is the provider either on a gratis basis or with an associated charge.
Outreach centres	see Learning Centres
Outreach programmes/activities	a systematic attempt to provide services beyond the conventional limits of institutional provision to particular segments of a community e.g. educational programmes for illiterate adults.
Participatory management	a system of institutional management in which every member of the institution is involved at one stage or the other in the decision making process.
Partnership	a strategy and a formal relationship between the institution and another institution or agency that engenders cooperation for the benefit of both parties and for the learners.
Peer assessment	a method of assessment that is based on the consensus opinion of a peer group of learners on the respective contributions made to the work of the group by each individual participant.
Performance appraisal	a systematic assessment of an individual's performance in order to assess his/her achievement of objectives, training needs, potential for promotion, eligibility for merit increment etc.
Performance indicators	criteria which are used by educational institutions themselves in self-evaluation and by external evaluators when judging the quality of educational provision.
Policy	a statement of aims, purpose, principles or intentions which serve as continuing guidelines for management in accomplishing objectives. <sup>16</sup>
Pre-requisites	something that is required or necessary as a prior condition, e.g. a course that is required prior to taking an advanced course.
Print media	printed, as distinguished from broadcast or electronically transmitted, communications
Prior learning	what has been achieved by a learner upon entering a programme of study by means of previous experience, knowledge or skills acquired in the workplace. <sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Johannsen, H. and Gerry, T. (1986) *International Directory of Management* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)

<sup>17</sup> Copenhagen Process [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/vocational\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/vocational_en.html)

Procedures	the documented steps in a process and how they are to be performed.
Process	a set of interrelated work activities characterized by a set of specific inputs and activities to achieve specific outputs.
Prospectus	a booklet produced by an institution for prospective students giving details about itself, its programmes, courses and admission requirements.
Provider	any organisation providing training or education.
Quality	the fitness for purpose of a product or service according to a set of required standards.
Quality assurance (internal)	the policies and procedures initiated by an institution which guarantee the quality of educational courses and qualifications
Quality Audit/Review (external)	a systematic, independent examination by an independent third party to determine whether quality activities in an institution and related results comply with plans and whether these plans are implemented effectively and are suitable to achieve the stated objectives.
Quality enhancement	efficiency in efforts at improving the performance or performance efficiency of a system.
Reflective practice	thoughtfully considering one's own experiences in applying knowledge to practice while being coached by professionals in the discipline.
Regulatory agencies	government or quasi government agencies with responsibility for the overall planning and monitoring of the educational provision of institutions.
Research	rigorous intellectual activity that probes into what is known to reach the unknown.
Scenario	a sequence of imagined events designed to indicate what might happen in real life
Self-Assessment	A process in which learners are required to answer questions or carry out prescribed activities and to judge the outcomes against pre-determined criteria.
Social Learning Capital	the blending of social capital and lifelong learning taking place in the context of the horizontal transfer of knowledge <sup>18</sup> .
Staff development	skills development, refresher programmes or other training provided for staff within or outside the institution to enable them to continuously update their knowledge and skills for effective and efficient performance and career advancement.
Stakeholder	any individual, group, unit, department or organisation that will have a significant impact on or will be significantly impacted by the quality of a specific process or service. They may be internal (e.g. staff, students) or external to the institution (e.g. employers, government; for agriculture they include farmers, educators, extension personnel, researchers, representatives of financial institutions and NGOs).
Standardisation	the establishment of standards for different levels of performance.

Standards	measurable criteria that provide the basis for forming judgements concerning the performance of an instructional activity , innovation or programme. <sup>19</sup>
Strategic Plan	a specific, action-oriented medium or long-term plan for making progress towards a set of institutional goals.
Student Handbook	an information book for registered students of an institution containing information on all matters relevant to students for their academic career in the institution.
Student:tutor ratio	the average number of students assigned to an individual tutor across a programme or institution.
Summative assessment	evaluation of learning that takes place on completion of the learning activity or activities. <sup>20</sup>
Summative evaluation	assessment that occurs at the completion of a course or project, which provides a summary account of its effectiveness and the extent to which it met its goals and objectives. <sup>21</sup>
Survey	the act of examining a process or questioning a selected sample of individuals to obtain data about a process, product or service.
Systemic change	change that occurs in all aspects and levels of the educational process.
Text messaging/SMS(Short Message Service)	A feature available with mobile phones which allows the interchange of short text messages between handsets.
Transparency	institutional processes that are characterized by openness, communication and clearly assigned accountability.
Tutoring	an interactive approach to disseminating knowledge that helps students to improve their learning strategies in order to promote empowerment and independent learning.
(Vertical) Progression	vertical movement of students from one level of education to the next higher level or towards gainful employment.
Vision	a short memorable statement that paints a vivid picture of an ambitious, desirable and future state aligned with institutional values. Its purpose is to inspire and act as a guide for decision-making and planning within a 5 year time horizon.

<sup>19</sup> [www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/assessment/iar/glossary.php](http://www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/assessment/iar/glossary.php)

<sup>20</sup> COL ibid

<sup>21</sup> COL ibid



## Appendix 2

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"Krishna Alluri has extensive experience in international development. He was the Education Specialist, Food Security & Environment and Team Leader, Learning for Livelihoods, Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Vancouver, Canada. While at COL Krishna initiated Life long learning for Farmers program in India. L3 Farmers is gaining national policy support in Sri Lanka and is at different stages of development in Jamaica, Kenya, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea and Uganda. Earlier, Krishna was an agricultural scientist with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), Philippines and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Nigeria for about 20 years. He was then the IRRI Liaison Scientist for Africa and Coordinator, International Network for Genetic Enhancement of Rice in Africa (INGER-Africa). INGER was then the largest crop improvement program in the world.

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K.Balasubramanian (Balasubramanian Kodhandaraman) was a consultant for international organizations like COL and UNDP. As a consultant for COL, he was involved in designing and implementing "Lifelong Learning (L3) for Farmers" Projects in India using Technology Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech MODE). He has also developed perspectives for promoting L3 concepts in various parts of Asia and Africa. He has more than 20 years of experience in development activities. He was associated with Indo-Swedish Forestry Coordination Programme and later joined M.S.Swaminathan Research Foundation and worked in the area of ecotechnology and sustainable development. He had the opportunity of getting involved in initiating Information and Communication Technology for Development (ICT4D) activities in 90s and was associated with various organizations such as UNDP, FAO, SIDA, ICRISAT etc in promoting ICT4D and sustainable natural resource management. His experiences include strengthening capacity building and human resource development using ICT in rural sector, agriculture and animal husbandry. He was involved with FAO in developing a framework for Open and Distance Learning for policy makers. He has blended academic perspectives, grassroots activism and policy advocacy in his professional career. He firmly believes on participatory development and perceives Tech MODE as a tool for sustainable development. He has a Ph.D. in Sociology from Bangalore University.

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Dr. Jeanette Bartley-Bryan is the Associate Vice President for Continuing Education, Open and Distance Learning at the University of Technology, Jamaica (UTech). Her portfolio includes providing leadership in the strategic development of non-traditional, flexible learning opportunities and virtual access to UTech, the leading poly-technical university in the English-speaking Caribbean.

With over 25 years of collective experience working with Caribbean and North American educational institutions, Dr. Bartley-Bryan has diverse expertise as an educator, corporate trainer, consultant and project manager in facilitating distance learning, organizational development & human resource development. She has coordinated several educational projects in collaboration with international agencies such as the World Bank, EU/EDF, COL, UNESCO, and PAHO/WHO. Her academic and professional track record has always been linked to the creation of new paradigms for learning and the development of indigenous, innovative educational materials and programmes for local and regional cultures, with application for the global environment.

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Professor Kshanika Hirimburegama holds a B Sc (Hons), M.Phil in Agriculture and a PhD from Katholieke University Leuven, Belgium. At present she is the Vice-Chancellor, University of Colombo and was a member of the University Grants Commission. She was the former Director of the Agro-technology & Community Service Center of the University of Colombo and the former Head of the Department of Plant Sciences, Faculty of Science. Since joining the University of Colombo, she pioneered research in plant cell & tissue culture and developed undergraduate & postgraduate courses on plant biotechnology/tissue culture for the first time in the Sri Lankan university. She has authored 35 research publications, 05 books, and 40 communications.

She has received funds for plant biotechnology & technology transfer to the university to a total of USD 430,000/= (Rs 43.0 Mn). For the first time in the country, biotechnology was mobilized and transferred to the rural sector through the Magampura Agro-technology & Community Service Center of the University of Colombo in Hambantota. The center was upgraded to Institute of Magampura Agro-technology & Rural Sciences. This approach would also be the first time that the opportunity is given for those who could not enter the university and now involved in agriculture, to gain knowledge through Certificates, Diplomas courses and Degree in agro technology from the university system.

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Dr. Buddhini Gayathri Jayatilleke is a Senior Lecturer in Educational Technology, at the Educational Technology Division, Open University of Sri Lanka. Having graduated in BSc, Natural Sciences (University of Colombo, Sri Lanka), MA in Education and Development: Distance Education (Institute of Education, University of London) and PhD in Educational Technology (Open University, Milton Keynes, UK). She has over ten years of experience in training academic staff members of the OUSL on distance education, writing self-instructional materials, producing audio-visual materials and e-learning. Currently she is involved in capacity building workshops on online tutoring and mentoring for the staff in higher education. Her

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Abtar Kaur is a professor at the Faculty of Education & Languages, Open University Malaysia. She has 26 years of teaching experience at various levels. She joined the Open University in 2002 and was a pioneer in setting up two important teaching & learning support centres. She was Director, Centre of Instructional Design & Technology and Director, Open Distance Learning Pedagogy Centre. Her research centres around pedagogical issues technology, having graduated in MSc, IDD&E (Syracuse University) and PhD, E-Learning (University Malaya). In the past 5 years, Abtar has received 5 international awards related to pedagogy & technology.

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Prof. Madhulika Kaushik is a Professor of Management at the School of Management Studies India and is currently serving the Wawasan Open University as the Director, Centre for Graduate Studies. She has over 30 years of teaching and research experience, the last 20 of which have been in ODL. She has held various positions at IGNOU, including the Director, School of Management Studies; Director, Electronic media Production Centre and Director, Planning and Development. She also served as the first Director of National Centre for Innovations in distance Education, IGNOU. Her field of specialization are Marketing and Consumer Behaviour and her research interests in ODL include Management of ODL systems, Quality management, learner behaviour and application of appropriate technologies in course delivery. She has published extensively in both national and international publications and has been consultant to international agencies such as UNDP, UNESCO, FAO, COL and ILO as well as the Indian Government.

For her contribution to the field of Education, she was awarded the Indira Gandhi Priyadarshini award in year 1998.

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Professor Denise Kirkpatrick is Pro Vice-Chancellor Learning Teaching and Quality at The Open University where she is responsible for strategic leadership of the University's supported, open-learning learning. She leads the research of new applications of ICT to support learning and teaching and is responsible for overseeing Quality Assurance policy, practice and standards. She has worked in a number of Australian universities, leading and managing distance learning operations. She has won national and international awards in learning and teaching. Denise was

Chair of the Australasian Council on Open Distance and E-learning and is a member of the Executive Committee of The International Council on Distance and E-learning (ICDE).

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Geetha Kulasekara is a lecturer attached to the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL). She worked as a Microbiology tutor in the Department of Botany for the past 10 years (1996 – 2005), and presently attached to the Educational Technology Division of OUSL. She earned her B.Sc. special degree in Botany in 1993, and M.Sc. in Plant Cell and Tissue Culture in 1998 from the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. Her current research interests are on instructional design and e-learning and presently following an M. Phil on Design and development of interactive multimedia for distance learners.

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Mrs. Caroline Leung is a Course Designer in the Educational Technology and Publishing Unit of the OUHK. She is involved in the development of both online and print-based course.

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Dr. Rob McTavish is a doctoral candidate at Simon Fraser University, where he has worked in the Centre for Online and Distance Education for 13 years in various roles, the last 8 years as a Program Director. Rob's research interests include cognitive load and instructional design issues related to online and distance education technologies, telehealth, and distance education pedagogies. He has worked on international projects in Sri Lanka, the Philippines and India, and with partners in Canada from Botswana, Thailand, Ghana, Cuba and Malawi.

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Planter at Belle Mare and founder member of Belle Mare Farm Agro Company specializing in marketing and sales. Has been working closely with NPCC in this pilot project, with a changing role from planter to business person.

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Productivity Consultant at the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC). Holds a BSc (Hons) in Crop Science and an MSc in Quality Management from the University of Mauritius. Was previously working for the Food and Agricultural Research Council (FARC) before joining the NPCC in January 2001. COL's contact point for the L3 project.

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Ms. Eva Tsang is the Senior Course Designer in the Educational Technology and Publishing Unit of the OUHK. She is in charge of course development and overall administration of OUHK's Online Learning Environment. Her strength is in instructional design and innovative use of

educational technology in education. She has been in charge of various e-learning projects including the development of online learning platforms and mobile learning. In 2006, she was concurrently appointed as the Director of the University's Centre for Innovation.

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Dr. V. Venkaiah is Professor of Management in Dr .B.R. Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad, India. He is associated with the University right from its inception. He was the Rector of the University during 1999-2001. The other positions he held during his service in the University include Executive Director (Research), Director (Academic), Director ( Student Services), Dean and Head, Department of Business Management. He was also a Member of the Executive Council, Finance Committee and several other Committees of the University. He has researched and written extensively in the areas of Open Distance Learning and Management. He authored/edited 10 books and published over 50 research papers in reputed international and national journals. Having widely traveled, he visited several foreign universities and presented papers in International Conferences, Seminars and Workshops. He is associated as editor/editorial advisor/member of several national and international journals in ODL. In recognition of his academic accomplishments, Prof. Venkaiah was awarded the Association of Asian Open Universities Visiting Fellowship by the Open University of Hong Kong in 1999. He was also honored with many awards including the Best Teacher award by the Government of Andhra Pradesh in 1995.

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Dr. Yuen has been Head of Educational Technology and Publishing Unit, Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK), since its inception in 1989. The Unit, in conjunction with the academic Schools, is in charge of the design, development, production and delivery of the multi-media course materials of the University. Dr. Yuen was concurrently appointed as Director of the Centre for Research in Adult and Distance Learning of the university in 2005. Dr. Yuen's expertise lies in the design, development and delivery of distance and open learning courses, and in the establishment of a quality assurance system to produce distance learning materials.

## Appendix 3

### WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

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