

## INTRODUCTION

Community engagement and service-learning are embedded in South African policy documents such as the Green Paper on Higher Education Transformation (1996), the White Paper on Higher Education (1997), the National Plan for Higher Education (2001), the Founding Document (2001) of the HEQC of the CHE, the HEQC Criteria for Institutional Audits (2004) and the HEQC Criteria for Programme Accreditation (2004).

The Founding Document (2001) of the HEQC identified “knowledge based community service” as one of the three areas – along with teaching and learning, and research – for the accreditation and quality assurance of higher education. Subsequently, the HEQC incorporated community engagement and its service-learning component into its national quality assurance systems. In June 2004 the HEQC released its Criteria for Institutional Audits, including criteria on service-learning (Criterion 7) and community engagement (Criterion 18). In November 2004 the HEQC released its Criteria for Programme Accreditation, including minimum requirements for service-learning (Criterion 1).

In order to assist HEIs to implement service-learning the HEQC and JET released *A Good Practice Guide and Self-evaluation Instruments for Managing the Quality of Service-Learning* – for comment in 2005 and publication in 2006. The Guide contains criteria for the good practice and self-assessment of service-learning at an institutional, faculty, programme and module level. Complementing the Guide, the overarching objective of this publication, *Service-Learning in the Curriculum: A Resource for Higher Education Institutions*, is to provide persons with an institution-wide responsibility for community engagement and service-learning, and academic staff wanting to integrate service-learning in their curricula, with a single, comprehensive resource, which includes ‘everything you need to know’ and more about service-learning.

Specific objectives of this book include:

- To provide an overview of national higher education policies underpinning the inclusion of community engagement and service-learning in South African higher education (Chapter 1);
- To provide a brief overview of key community engagement and service-learning initiatives in South Africa since the release of the White Paper (Chapter 1);
- To introduce the notion of a ‘scholarship of engagement’ and to contextualise service-learning within the broader notion of community engagement (Chapter 1);
- To enable academics to acquire and demonstrate an understanding of the conceptual and theoretical framework for service-learning (Chapter 2);
- To provide the theory and practice of an integrated curriculum model for service-learning (Chapters 3, 4 and 7);
- To provide academic staff with the theory and practice of designing, developing, implementing and evaluating a module<sup>1</sup> with service-learning in an academic learning programme (Chapters 3, 4 and 7);

- To provide guidelines for the design, implementation and assessment of reflection activities for service-learning (Chapter 4);
- To present the philosophy and mechanisms of partnership, so that academic staff may acquire the knowledge and skills required to develop and sustain collaborative partnerships (Chapter 5);
- To identify, prevent, manage and contain risks in service-learning, for the protection of all partners (Chapter 6);
- To enable academic staff to structure their roles and responsibilities in developing, implementing and evaluating a service-learning module (Chapter 7);
- To support and facilitate the development of initiatives aimed at institutionalising service-learning at HEIs (Chapter 8); and
- To promote quality through building the capacity of service-learning coordinators and academic staff to monitor, review, evaluate and improve service-learning in the curriculum (Chapter 9).

Persons with an institution-wide responsibility for community engagement and service-learning may use this book as a guide to running seminars and workshops on service-learning for academic staff wanting to integrate service-learning in their curricula. The Compact Disc (CD) that is available to complement this book includes a PowerPoint presentation on each chapter and may be particularly useful to those with an institutional, faculty or departmental responsibility for service-learning.

Each chapter of this book commences with a statement of key outcomes, and concludes with a self-study activity aimed at assisting academic staff to apply the content of the chapter to specific tasks related to conceptualising and implementing service-learning. We trust that this book will be a valuable resource – both for persons with an institutional responsibility for service-learning and academic staff wanting to incorporate service-learning into their curricula.

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1. In all cases in this book, the term 'module' can be replaced with the term 'course'.