

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES: RECOMMENDED INDICATORS AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR MANAGING THE QUALITY OF SERVICE-LEARNING

The following recommended indicators can serve as guidelines for good practice relevant to the different levels within the institution on which service-learning functions:

- The institutional level;
- The faculty/ school level;
- The programme/ qualification level; and
- The module/ course level.

In subsequent sections of the Guide, evaluation instruments for the various levels provide appropriate reflective questions and examples of evidence that can be adapted by institutions for self-review purposes.

It should be pointed out at this stage that the application of the framework does not imply that each component needs to be discussed in full at each level. So, for example, an institution could have a service-learning funding policy that cuts across all levels of service-learning.

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL GUIDELINES

Institutional Input

Indicator 1:

The institution's mission, purpose and goals with regard to service-learning are indicative of its responsiveness to the local, national and international context.

- 1.1 Service-learning (and, if relevant, community engagement more generally) that is fully integrated with teaching, learning and research is part of the institution's mission, purpose and strategic goals.
- 1.2 The institutional commitment to service-learning, as expressed in its mission, purpose and strategic goals, is responsive to and aligned with local, national and international priorities.
- 1.3 The strategic priorities and transformation goals of the institution provide adequately for the development and implementation of service-learning.
- 1.4 The institution's philosophy and values include the notion of service-learning as a scholarly activity (e.g. in terms of a scholarship of engagement), and service-learning is afforded due recognition.

Indicator 2:

The institution's commitment to service-learning is reflected in policies, procedures and strategic planning.

- 2.1 The institution has an inclusive policy giving effect to its commitment to service-learning.
- 2.2 There is synergy between and integration of the various institutional policies with regard to service-learning.
- 2.3 The institution's commitment to service-learning is reflected in its strategic planning, with clearly defined procedures, time frames, responsibilities, reporting and communication arrangements.
- 2.4 Effective mechanisms for managing the quality of service-learning are implemented.

Indicator 3:

The institution's leadership, management structures and organisational apparatus reflect its commitment to service-learning.

- 3.1 The institution has purposeful leadership and/or line management and dedicated structures to create an enabling environment for community engagement in general, and service-learning in particular.
- 3.2 There exist adequate management structures to facilitate the development of co-operative partnerships with external stakeholders in order to develop quality service-learning modules.
- 3.3 There are institution-wide structures that take responsibility for the planning, implementation and review of service-learning.

Indicator 4:

There is adequate resource allocation for delivering quality service-learning as part of the institution's core functions.

- 4.1 The institution has a clear policy and procedures to ensure that funding (financial resources) for service-learning is adequate and allocated appropriately.
- 4.2 The recruitment, appointment and performance management of staff are aligned with the institution's need for special expertise in the development, coordination and promotion of service-learning.
- 4.3 Provision for infrastructure and information resources is indicative of the institution's commitment to service-learning.

Indicator 5:

Engagement, collaboration and partnerships are cornerstones of the institution's service-learning objectives.

- 5.1 The institution has effective structures and processes for the identification and formulation of regional engagement and collaboration.
- 5.2 The institution has clear guidelines on partnership agreements with communities and the service sector, which accommodate service-learning initiatives.
- 5.3 The institution collaborates and networks at regional, national and international levels with other HEIs engaged in service-learning.

Institutional Process*Indicator 6:*

Service-learning is managed, facilitated and coordinated effectively at institutional level.

- 6.1 There is reciprocity, continuous communication and effective coordination among internal and external service-learning stakeholders.
- 6.2 Service-learning is accommodated in the institution's management information system for effective integration as a core function.
- 6.3 Management of resource utilisation for service-learning is dealt with by the appropriate institution-wide structures.

Indicator 7:

There is adequate institutional support for the development and implementation of service-learning.

- 7.1 There is adequate service-learning capacity building and development for staff.
- 7.2 The institution has clear guidelines for student development to ensure that students are adequately motivated and prepared to enter programmes that include service-learning courses.
- 7.3 The institution has specific opportunities or programmes for capacity building with regard to service-learning for partners and other external participants or stakeholders.
- 7.4 There is institutional recognition for excellence and innovation with regard to service-learning, for staff, students and external partners/ participants.

Indicator 8:

The institution supports service-learning as a means to promote contextualised, relevant teaching and learning.

- 8.1 The institution provides adequate, ongoing support to promote good practice in teaching and learning through the pedagogy of service-learning.

- 8.2 Service-learning is supported as a vehicle for academic transformation in the direction of more contextualised curricula and learning materials, orientated towards South Africa and Africa.
- 8.3 The institution ensures the assessment of students' service-learning is appropriate, contextualised and includes input from external partners.

Indicator 9:

There is institutional support for research on and through service-learning.

- 9.1 Staff members and postgraduate students are encouraged and supported to conduct research on and through service-learning.
- 9.2 The institution encourages the sharing and dissemination of the findings of service-learning research to academic colleagues and external partners (communities and the service sector).
- 9.3 The institution actively supports and creates opportunities for participatory, interdisciplinary, inter-institutional and international research collaboration, specifically within the context of service-learning.

Institutional Output and Impact

Indicator 10:

Monitoring and evaluation of service-learning are conducted to gauge its output and impact.

- 10.1 Quality arrangements for community engagement in general, and service-learning in particular, are formalised and integrated with those of teaching and learning.
- 10.2 The impact of service-learning on student recruitment, retention and throughput is monitored and evaluated annually.
- 10.3 The institution has clear and consistent procedures to evaluate the contribution of service-learning as a competitive advantage in responding to local, regional and national priorities.

Institutional Review

Indicator 11:

Review of service-learning takes place for continuous improvement and innovation.

- 11.1 The institution implements a formalised cycle of review and benchmarking of its status with regard to the delivery of quality service-learning.
- 11.2 The service-learning policy that exists is regularly reviewed and refined in a process that includes all relevant stakeholders.
- 11.3 The institution supports the dissemination of outcomes of its service-learning initiatives to external partners in order to promote reciprocity, accountability and transparency.

FACULTY/ SCHOOL LEVEL GUIDELINES

Faculty/ School Input

Indicator 1:

Vision, mission, goals and objectives are responsive to context.

- 1.1 The faculty's commitment to service-learning is expressed in its vision and mission.
- 1.2 The faculty's service-learning policy, strategic plan(s) and procedures are responsive to the institutional strategic priorities and transformation goals.

Indicator 2:

Strategic plan(s), procedures and criteria reflect commitment to service-learning.

- 2.1 Service-learning is an integral part of the faculty's statement on teaching and learning, and research.
- 2.2 A strategic plan, with realistic targets, time frames and responsibilities, is in place for service-learning.
- 2.3 There is synergy between service-learning and the various teaching, learning, research, assessment and quality assurance strategic plans, procedures and activities of the faculty.

Indicator 3:

Organisational and management structures provide for service-learning.

- 3.1 Curriculum design and regulations clearly provide for service-learning.
- 3.2 There are clear instructions and criteria for the approval and implementation of new service-learning initiatives.
- 3.3 The faculty has a committee/ system/ structure in place for managing service-learning.

Indicator 4:

Resources: funding, staff and infrastructure.

- 4.1 The responsibilities of the faculty for the planning and allocation of resources for service-learning are clearly stipulated and acted on.
- 4.2 Resource allocation for service-learning is adequate.
- 4.3 Resource implications of running a new module are considered prior to its approval.
- 4.4 The recruitment, appointment and performance management of staff are aligned with the faculty's need for special service-learning expertise.

Indicator 5:

Regional collaboration and partnerships: communities, the service sector, and other HEIs.

- 5.1 The faculty or appropriate structure has partnership arrangements in place with service providers and communities to support service-learning.
- 5.2 Partnership arrangements and collaboration are aligned with the faculty's broad community engagement initiative/ plan.
- 5.3 Module planning and approval take into account the needs and requirements of communities and service providers.

Faculty/ School Process

Indicator 6:

Service-learning is managed, facilitated and coordinated.

- 6.1 There are structures (e.g. a committee) to oversee the planning and management of service-learning.
- 6.2 Service-learning activities are coordinated for maximum effectiveness and to encourage inter-disciplinary collaboration.

Indicator 7:

There is support (for staff, students and partners) for development, delivery and implementation.

- 7.1 Staff are supported in the day-to-day administration and implementation of service-learning activities (e.g. by a fulltime official).
- 7.2 There are structures (expertise/ office/ staff) to assist with the design and development of service-learning study materials.
- 7.3 Students are adequately motivated and prepared to enter service-learning activities.
- 7.4 Transport to and from the communities/ service providers is available to students.

Indicator 8:

There is support for relevant teaching, learning and assessment.

- 8.1 Appropriate training is available to staff responsible for facilitating and teaching service-learning modules.
- 8.2 There are regular discussion forums/ sessions for staff involved in service-learning.
- 8.3 Existing assessment policies (instruments, criteria and methods) include requirements specific to service-learning.

Indicator 9:

There is support for service-learning research.

- 9.1 The faculty actively works to ensure that service-learning research is adequately funded.
- 9.2 The faculty rewards accredited research outputs on and through service-learning.
- 9.3 The faculty encourages the dissemination of service-learning research findings (including conference papers, and both popular and scholarly articles) to academic colleagues and external partners.

Faculty/ School Output and Impact*Indicator 10:*

Monitoring and evaluation of service-learning are conducted to gauge its output and impact.

- 10.1 The implementation of service-learning modules is monitored and evaluated on a regular basis.
- 10.2 The impact on participating constituencies and the outcomes of service-learning modules are monitored.
- 10.3 All students are engaged in at least one service-learning module during their academic training.

Faculty/ School Review*Indicator 11:*

Review of service-learning takes place for continuous improvement and innovation.

- 11.1 The service-learning strategic plan(s) and procedures are regularly reviewed and refined.
- 11.2 Funds are available for the development of new and improved service-learning initiatives.
- 11.3 Instruments/ methods/ management information systems are available to monitor, evaluate and review the faculty's service-learning activities.

PROGRAMME/ QUALIFICATION LEVEL GUIDELINES

Programme Input

Indicator 1:

The programme is aligned with the aspects of the faculty's mission and purpose relating to service-learning.

- 1.1 The programme has a definite service-learning component in the form of a separate module(s) or integrated service-learning units of existing modules.
- 1.2 There is clear alignment of the programme's service-learning component with the faculty's statements on service-learning (e.g. in the mission statement/ teaching and/or learning policy or procedure/ community engagement policy etc.).

Indicator 2:

The programme composition reflects the commitment of the faculty and relevant departments to service-learning.

- 2.1 The programme's service-learning component was planned at the same time as the programme as a whole or, in cases where the service-learning component was added later, integration with the rest of the modules was successful.

Indicator 3:

The programme's organisational and management structure reflects its commitment to service-learning.

- 3.1 The programme management team includes an expert on service-learning, on a consultative/ co-option basis at the very least.
- 3.2 At least one other programme management team member keeps abreast of the latest developments in service-learning/ community engagement.

Indicator 4:

The programme's resource allocation reflects its commitment to service-learning.

- 4.1 Allocation of staff hours to the service-learning component of the programme is adequate and realistic.
- 4.2 Staff who are assigned to the service-learning component of the programme are capacitated to execute their tasks efficiently.
- 4.3 Funds allocated to the service-learning component are adequate to implement it effectively.

Programme Process

Indicator 5:

Teaching and learning in the service-learning components of the programme are indicative of innovation and appropriate educational design principles.

- 5.1 High-quality learning material that is relevant to the African context is developed for the service-learning component of the programme.
- 5.2 Lecturers are empowered on a continuous basis to facilitate service-learning appropriately and effectively.

Indicator 6:

Research related to service-learning is actively promoted and facilitated in the programme.

- 6.1 Research is viewed by staff as an integral part of effective teaching in service-learning.
- 6.2 Evidence exists of research projects focused on service-learning within the programme.

Indicator 7:

Student participation in the service-learning component of the programme is assessed in an appropriate, fair and authentic way.

- 7.1 The service-learning component of the programme includes varied and authentic continuous assessment structures.
- 7.2 Stakeholders other than the lecturers are involved in the assessment of students and such stakeholders are trained in fair assessment practices.
- 7.3 Assessment opportunities are aligned with the outcomes of the service-learning component.
- 7.4 Students receive feedback within a reasonable time after assessment.

Indicator 8:

Service-learning is managed, facilitated and coordinated effectively within the programme as a whole.

- 8.1 There exist good communication and coordination among all stakeholders involved in the service-learning component.
- 8.2 Students are informed regarding all arrangements pertaining to service-learning.
- 8.3 There is support for students in order to improve the success rate.

Indicator 9:

The infrastructure and library resources of the institution/ faculty/ programme are indicative of the importance placed on service-learning.

- 9.1 There are enough books/ journals/ documents related to service-learning and community engagement in the library.
- 9.2 Transport to and from the community/ service provider is readily available to students.

Programme Output and Impact

Indicator 10:

Student retention, throughput rates and programme impact receive adequate attention in the programme.

- 10.1 Student retention and throughput numbers are monitored on an annual basis.
- 10.2 Impact studies are conducted to determine the service-learning component's impact on students, on the service providers and on the community involved.

Programme Review

Indicator 11:

The service-learning components of the programme are reviewed in an appropriate manner.

- 11.1 A formalised cycle to review the service-learning aspects of the programme has been developed and implemented.

MODULE/ COURSE LEVEL GUIDELINES

Module Input

Indicator 1:

Partnerships are designed to be collaborative.

- 1.1 Care is taken to identify and select appropriate partners that fit the outcomes for student learning, while also meeting the outcomes, resources and needs of the partners.
- 1.2 Partners are recognised and validated, through clarification of roles, expectations and benefits.

Indicator 2:

Service-learning is integrated in the curriculum.

- 2.1 The service-learning module conforms to institutional curriculum requirements and legislation.
- 2.2 Service-learning is conceptualised as pedagogy.
- 2.3 A curriculum model was adopted for designing the service-learning module.

Indicator 3:

Planning takes place for implementation of the designed module.

- 3.1 Transportation arrangements for service-learning activities are planned.
- 3.2 Scheduling of contact sessions and placements is coordinated.
- 3.3 Students' attendance and involvement are monitored.
- 3.4 Possible risks and liability issues immanent in the module are considered.
- 3.5 Documentation and record-keeping are planned.
- 3.6 Available resources (physical space, human resources and operating costs) are identified and planned.

Module Process*Indicator 4:*

Student orientation and training are conducted.

- 4.1 Students are introduced to the concept of service-learning.
- 4.2 Students are orientated to general logistical considerations and risks.
- 4.3 Students are introduced to the broader issues relating to the module.
- 4.4 Students are orientated to their responsibilities and what is expected of them.

Indicator 5:

Sustainable service-learning partnerships are maintained.

- 5.1 Communication mechanisms in the partnership are maintained.
- 5.2 Representatives of partners acquire skills and are provided with support to fulfil their commitment to the partnership outcomes.

Indicator 6:

Formative assessment of student learning is conducted.

- 6.1 Students are engaged in reflection.
- 6.2 Student learning is assessed formatively.

Indicator 7:

The process is managed.

7.1 All plans related to the module (see *Indicator 3*, above, on planning) are coordinated.

Module Output and Impact

Indicator 8:

The impact is monitored and evaluated.

8.1 The impact on students, academic staff, department, profession, community, and service provider is assessed.

8.2 Partners' outcomes are assessed.

Indicator 9:

Summative assessment of student learning is conducted.

9.1 Student learning is assessed summatively.

9.2 Quality assurance is assessed.

Indicator 10:

The completion of the service-learning module is demonstrated and celebrated.

10.1 Appreciation is expressed for all stakeholders, and recognition is given.

10.2 Valuable information is exchanged.

10.3 Service-learning achievements are demonstrated and celebrated.

Module Review

Indicator 11:

Evaluation and review for improvement takes place.

11.1 Formative module evaluation takes place.

11.2 Summative module evaluation takes place.

11.3 The service-learning module is revised where necessary.

Indicator 12:

The partnership is expanded or terminated.

12.1 The future of the partnership is determined.