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Research Report

Prepared by
Roy du Pré
Bastian Baumann

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Disclaimer

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Address

GFA Consulting Group GmbH

Eulenkrogstraße 82

D-22359 Hamburg

Germany

Phone: +49 (40) 6 03 06 – 703

Fax: +49 (40) 6 03 06 – 799

E-mail: NvT.Lot9@gfa-group.de

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|----------------|--|
| CHE | Council on Higher Education |
| CHERTL | Centre for Higher Education, Research, Teaching and Learning |
| CHETT | Compulsory High Education Teacher Training |
| DHET | Department of Higher Education and Training |
| DoE | Department of Education |
| EC | European Commission |
| EU | European Union |
| ECTS | European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System |
| EASCEP | Existing Academic Staff Capacity Enhancement Programme |
| HEA | Higher Education Academy |
| HEI | Higher Education Institution |
| HELMP | Higher Education Leadership and Management Programme |
| HELTASA | Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of South Africa |
| HEQC | Higher Education Quality Committee |
| NESP | Nurturing Emerging Scholars Programme |
| NGAP | New Generation of Academics Programme (nGAP) |
| NRF | National Research Foundation |
| NSS | National Student Satisfaction Survey |
| QEP | Quality Education Project |
| RDG | Research Development Grant |
| SEDA | Staff and Educational Development Association |
| SOM | Senior Officials Meeting |
| SoTL | Scholarship of Teaching and Learning |
| SSAU-DP | Staffing South Africa's Universities Development Programme |
| SSAUF | Staffing South Africa's Universities' Framework |
| SSEP | Supplementary Staff Employment Programme |



| | |
|----------------|---|
| SUFH | Swedish Association of Higher Education |
| SWEDNET | Swedish Network for Educational Development in Higher Education |
| TDG | Teaching Development Grant |
| TDCA | Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement |
| UCDG | University Capacity Development Grant |
| UKPSF | UK Professional Standards Framework |
| USA | Universities South Africa |
| UTQ | University Teaching Qualification |



1. Background to the research project

This joint project between South Africa and the European Union (EU) is funded by the local “Dialogue Facility” also known as the Trade Development Cooperation Agreement Facility.

The project has the overall objective of "Improving the effectiveness of university teaching through assessment and accreditation of academics as teachers" with specific objectives to:

- *Engage with European and local stakeholders to identify current initiatives in promoting high quality teaching in South African universities,*
- *Explore how selected EU countries promote high quality teaching; and*
- *Explore possibilities for engagement with EU partners in working towards a South African system that would strengthen and recognise quality university teaching.*

The project is in the context of the support by a Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) signed by South Africa and the European Union (EU) in 1999, which entered into force in May 2004 and was amended in 2009. The Agreement provides the basis for comprehensive cooperation between South Africa and the EU and covers several areas, including education. The Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the CHE has identified the need to raise the quality of teaching and learning across the higher education system as one means of improving poor student success in higher education.

At the third Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) between the European Commission and DHET, held on 28 October 2015 in Brussels, DHET took the opportunity to highlight the strategic emphasis it is placing on teacher quality, on improving teaching at universities and on developing the next generation of academics as key leaders that can help improve the quality of the university system. As part of the conclusions to the meeting, the two parties agreed that the joint rolling work-plan 2016-2017 would include 1 to 3 demand-driven dialogues per year. A number of possible dialogue topics were proposed, including European/South African experiences in the training of academics. It is in this context that this project was proposed.

[extracted from Specific Terms of Reference: FWC Beneficiaries 2013-Lot 9EuropeAid/2016 380249V1/C/SER/multi]

Methodology of the research report

The local expert requested responses from universities to several questions to ascertain the current developments in the university sector in South Africa regarding:

- the process of improving the effectiveness and quality of university teaching,
- the professionalisation of teaching, and
- the development of university teachers in teaching and learning.

The following questions informed the drafting of this Research Report:



- What has been the response in your institution to the project of “Improving the effectiveness and quality of university teaching?”
- What is your institution’s response to the concept of assessment and accreditation of academics as teachers as a way of achieving this?
- Would it work for all academics in your institution to have a Post-graduate/higher education qualification in order to be appointed/promoted/advanced/rewarded monetarily/serve as criteria for study leave/etc?
- What plans/policies/processes/initiatives are already in place or being planned for at your institution in the area of “Improving the effectiveness of university teaching through assessment and accreditation of academics as teachers?”
- What activities/initiatives have already taken place at your institution, or which you are planning, to get the ball rolling? For example
 - seminars,
 - workshops,
 - conferences,
 - staff development programmes (continuing professional development),
 - formal higher education/Post-graduate degrees/diplomas/modules
 - informal qualifications/programmes
 - short courses
 - teaching awards
 - Any other
- What is the response in your university to the inclusion of HE/PG Degrees/Diplomas as a requirement for appointment/promotion/etc?
- If you have any, please provide figures of the number of academics involved in registration for, or graduates of degrees/diplomas, or those taking short courses/modules.

The South African Higher Education sector has largely responded positively to the request by the local expert to gain information on activities related to the improvement of the effectiveness and quality of university teaching. Vice Chancellors and managers responsible for academic development who were approached were forthcoming in sharing what their institutions suggested in this regard. Further information was obtained through desk-top research to supplement and support information provided by respondents and to fill in gaps in existing approaches.

The chapter on the European approach in Higher Education and University Teacher Competence in Europe is based on desk-top research and includes the personal experience of the European expert.

1.1 Introduction

The Council on Higher Education (CHE) publication ‘South African Higher Education Reviewed: Two decades of democracy’ (2016) offers a detailed account of a range of core issues in the South African university sector in the two decades since the emergence of a democratically elected government in South Africa and the adoption of the South African constitution in 1996. The book is the product of the work of eight expert CHE Task Teams and contains chapters on the developments and current state of higher education in SA with respect to Regulation, Governance, Teaching and Learning, Research, Community Engagement, Academic Staffing and Funding.



The contributors have “reflected and analysed the higher education sector from different vantage points, and brought their collective wisdom to bear on the intractable problems that beset the sector, as well as pointed out the milestones reached in the long journey towards a more equitable sector ...” (CHE, 2016:foreword). In the overview, Denyse Webbstock sketches the broad higher education context with regard to: (a) the international trends of massification and globalisation; (b) a fundamental shift “in the way knowledge is defined and understood, and how this affects purpose” (CHE, 2016:14); and (c) the swift growth rate of information and communication technologies. The book also identifies some of the issues and problems concerning teaching and learning in universities, “how curriculum is organised and difficulties with regard to integrating different pedagogies” (CHE, 2016:45). Chapter 4, on Teaching and Learning again addresses the “implications of differentiation on teaching” (CHE, 2016:153-157) and that if there is not “a clear sense of institutional identity” then “Academics have a very difficult time determining what is expected of them in terms of the kinds of graduates they should be developing” (CHE, 2016:155).

The Review provides a strong argument for addressing and improving the quality of teaching and learning in South African Higher Education, and for enhancing academics as teachers. It emphasises that student success requires professionalisation of teaching, however, this professionalisation is dependent on general university conditions, and that professional learning is the result of formal courses and policies, as well as that of the general milieu.

1.2 High Quality Teaching in the 21st Century

A number of terms are used in initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning in South African Higher Education institutions. This section will briefly elaborate on these terms in order to understand where they come from and what they mean.

1.2.1 Enhancing Academics as Teachers

The 21st century world has witnessed an ever-increasing demand for access to Higher Education. Students now enter Higher Education with a far greater diversity of characteristics than in the past. As a result, the quality of university teaching is becoming more and more important. “While academics have always been expected to take on the dual roles of university teacher and university researcher, the voracious demands of the research component, with the perceived status accorded to universities by large numbers of publications, have often consumed an inordinate amount of the time and resources needed to develop and sustain quality university teaching. There is a growing recognition internationally that this has to change if a significant number of students are to succeed in higher education. Increasingly higher education teaching, like any other teaching is being recognised as an activity that demands specific skills and therefore training” (CHE, 2015:15).

In a recent report from the European Commission (High Level Group on Modernisation of Higher Education, 2013) one of the recommendations stated: “All staff teaching in higher education institutions in 2020 should have received certified pedagogical training. Continuous professional education as teachers should become a requirement for teachers in the higher education sector” (EC, 2013:31).

Internationally, there are several initiatives to address the changing nature of academic careers in Higher Education, including a shift in some institutions (in the UK for example) towards the use of ‘teaching-only’ contracts. This is in response to the emerging professional development needs of teaching staff who may have moved from traditional academic roles and contracts (including research, teaching and knowledge exchange) to



so-called 'teaching-only' roles and contracts, and the need to support this (new) group of staff (HESA, 2014).

There are numerous activities taking place at South African institutions as well, aimed at improving the quality of teaching by enhancing academics as teachers, in order to address the challenges facing the Higher Education sector (outlined in the CHE review of SA higher education in the 20 years after democracy, 2016). These activities include induction programmes, seminars and workshops, training of various kinds, including formal qualifications and short courses, peer learning, mentoring and conferences. Various initiatives include, encourage or support the engagement of academics in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).

The development of strategic plans on teaching and learning in South Africa also led to new institution-wide roles for academic development staff, many of whom were re-conceptualised as teaching and learning specialists or managers. New senior positions such as Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Deans of Teaching and Learning were created to drive and implement these plans across institutions (CHE, 2016:167). The establishment of a chair in teaching and learning at the University of Johannesburg and a South African Research Chair (SARCHI) in Higher Education and Human Development at the University of the Free State is further evidence of an increased focus on this core aspect of higher education (CHE, 2016:167,168).

The CHE Institutional Audits Directorate indicates that "recognition of the need for professionalisation of university teaching is gaining ground internationally. A similar recognition is needed if South Africa is to address the learning needs of a diverse student population effectively. Pedagogical approaches that are not rooted in the scholarship of teaching and learning – research combined with reflective practice – are unlikely to be effective in promoting learning for many students. Curriculum developed without reference to sound design principles is unlikely to lead to the development of desired graduate attributes" (CHE, 2015:16).

1.2.2 Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

SoTL is a growing movement in post-secondary education which arises within the international debate on improving the quality of teaching within universities. SoTL refers to scholarly inquiry into student learning which advances the practice of teaching by making inquiry findings public. According to Healy, "the scholarship of teaching involves engagement with research into teaching and learning, critical reflection of practice, and communication and dissemination about the practice of one's subject. This provides a challenging agenda for the development of subject-based teaching. Implementing this agenda includes applying the principles of good practice in the disciplines; developing the status of teaching; developing the complementary nature of teaching and research; and undertaking discipline-based pedagogical research" (Healy, 2010:169).

SoTL builds on many past traditions in Higher Education. Terms closely related to this term include "good teaching (that which promotes student learning and desired outcomes and is recognised by student satisfaction, peer review, etc.) and scholarly teaching (in which teaching is regarded as an area of study and the teaching and learning knowledge base is regarded as an additional discipline in which to develop expertise" (Wikipedia). A number of initiatives and activities in Europe have arisen out of the concept of SoTL (see also Section III).

Editors Shirley Booth and Laura Woolcott's 'The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education' examines the area of scholarship that has come to be known as SoTL. The chapters constitute an anthology of SoTL work by a variety of authors in a variety of contexts. The book is the result of a research collaboration which spanned three groups of



academics from Swedish and South African universities. The three groups were educational researchers with a focus on learning and teaching in higher education, academic developers charged with supporting academic staff in developing pedagogical competence, and teachers in the disciplinary and professional subjects of study who have a SoTL interest. The academics were from the three universities in Sweden, and the University of the Witwatersrand and Vaal University of Technology in South Africa. The scope of the project was twofold. First, “it was to investigate the constitution of SoTL in consideration of the similarities and differences between national demands and expectations on the one hand, and individual interests and possibilities on the other. Second, it was to research the potential of SoTL as an agent of change in three respects: improving the quality of student learning, transforming the pedagogical practices of institutions of higher education, and potentially transforming society in the age of the knowledge society” (Booth and Woolcott, 2015:1). The value of the book is that it not only describes the backgrounds and interests, as well as the results of the research, reflections and own developments in the field of the Swedish group, but also that of the South African group. This book is a good example of studies that will be of benefit to South African academics who are engaging with SoTL in their effort to improve the quality of teaching and learning in South African universities.

The CHE’s: South African Higher Education Reviewed (2016:168-171), also discusses SoTL as a move to “better theorised accounts of teaching and learning and more nuanced explanations of what affects quality in this area and what constrains or enables student success” CHE, 2016:168).

1.2.3 Standards/Assessment/Accreditation in University Teaching

There has been a growing concern in the Higher Education sector in many other countries in the world about the quality of teaching in Higher Education. The Higher Education Academy in the United Kingdom (UK HEA) looked at the role and responsibilities of the high school teacher, what was required of them, and the situation when school students moved from school to university. It pointed out that “a teacher’s primary responsibility is to facilitate learning ... an excellent teacher is someone who does their utmost to ensure that every student reaches his or her potential, but there is a minimum threshold acceptable for a school teacher to be allowed to practice. In England the current criteria is laid out in the Department for Education’s Teachers’ Standards. These represent a demanding set of standards which Initial Teacher Training students and Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) are assessed against, the latter in their first year of teaching while on probation” (Glaister et al, 2013:61).

The concern then was “what changes when school students enter university and encounter a greater variety of styles of university teaching, a greater number of university teachers and, more importantly, university teachers with a wider range of attributes and aptitudes for teaching?” (Glaister *et al*, 2013:61). A set of standards proposed for university teaching was embedded within the Higher Education Academy UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) which would allow for a more robust assessment of whether a university teacher had met a minimum acceptable threshold. The European Commission also recommended “academic staff entrance, progression and promotion decisions should take account of an assessment of teaching performance alongside other factors” (EC, 12013:33).



1.2.4 Pedagogical Competence

According to Lindberg-Sand and Sonesson, “visible proofs of excellence in teaching and learning are increasingly important aspects of institutional branding in higher education. Teaching competence is brought forward as a central aspect of the quality of programmes” (2008:123-139). Consequently, Sweden considered the route of compulsory higher education teacher training and the development of a national standards framework based on SoTL. The HE Ordinance (2002) stated that to get permanent positions, lecturers should have completed the Compulsory Higher Education Teacher Training (CHETT) (ICED, 2014:2).

A term that came to be used increasingly in Sweden is ‘pedagogical competence’ which refers to educational and teaching qualifications. When assessing pedagogical competence, the quality of teaching is the primary consideration. Pedagogical competence is demonstrated by successful teaching and development of teaching as well as by evaluations and student learning (The model is based on theories on SoTL, and is inspired by the report, A Swedish perspective on Pedagogical competence (Å Ryegård, K Apelgren & T Olsson 2010:124).

1.2.5 Professional Development

The CHE Institutional Audit Directorate indicates that “recognition of the need for professionalisation of university teaching is gaining ground internationally. A similar recognition is needed if South Africa is to address the learning needs of a diverse student population effectively. Pedagogical approaches that are not rooted in the scholarship of teaching and learning – research combined with reflective practice – are unlikely to be effective in promoting learning for many students. Curriculum developed without reference to sound design principles is unlikely to lead to the development of desired graduate attributes.” (CHE, 2015:16)

In 2013 the South African government approved a White Paper, ‘Building an expanded, effective and integrated post-school system’ which stated that “A focused renewal and expansion of the academic profession is vital for the long-term sustainability of high-quality public higher education in South Africa” (DHET, 2013,36). There are two measures of direct relevance to this focus area: “Supporting the development of lecturers’ teaching skills. While this is best done within disciplines, and therefore requires mentoring and co-teaching, academics can also benefit from opportunities to examine and develop their teaching practice on an ongoing basis”, and “the development of appropriate systems to better support and reward teaching in universities” (DHET, 2013:36).

The CHE Institutional Audits Directorate’s baseline study refers to the recommendation of the European Commission (EC) that “all staff teaching in higher education institutions in 2020 should have received certified pedagogical training.”(CHE, 2016:16). This underscores the need for continuous professional education of university teachers to become a requirement for teachers in the higher education sector. Many activities presently taking place at institutions are “aimed at enhancing academics as teachers, (and) include induction programmes, seminars and workshops, training of various kinds, including formal qualifications and short courses, peer learning, mentoring and conferences. Various initiatives include, encourage or support the engagement of academics in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL)” (CHE, 2016:16).

The concern in South Africa is that:

“... few, if any, university teachers receive training in university teaching prior to being appointed as a lecturer. Unlike the practice in some countries, the Netherlands, for example, where post-graduate students receive formal



pedagogical training, and the UK where all new lecturers undertake a Post-graduate Certificate, South African post-graduates are not expected to undertake pedagogical training, although, in many cases, they are involved in some form of teaching or tutoring. As a result, university induction programmes have become the default vehicles for initial training as a university teacher ... The ability of some of the other induction programmes, described in the submissions as once-off or of short duration, to fulfil an initial training function is very limited; another form of initial training would therefore be needed."

(CHE, 2015:16)

After initial induction into the profession it then becomes apparent and important that continuous professional development is needed.



2. Initiatives by the Department of Higher Education and Training and Council on Higher Education to enhance academics as teachers

According to the National Development Plan (NPC, 2011:271), the South African Higher Education system is a “low participation, high attrition” system. Statistics produced by DHET and CHE show that less than half of the students who enter Higher Education institutions (HEIs) complete their programmes after six years. Considering that the participation rate of 20-24 year-olds is less than 20%, the low completion rate is of great concern (CHE, 2014: 6). DHET initiated a range of responses to support universities to achieve improved learning outcomes, not least through the allocation of earmarked Teaching Development Grants (TDGs) to universities. (see also project’s ‘Specific Terms of Reference’:2)

The CHE also introduced the Quality Enhancement Project (QEP), a five-year project focused on the improvement of teaching and learning in both public and private higher education institutions.

2.1 Initiatives by the Department of Higher Education and Training

The policy documents guiding the DHET in this project and process include, Ministerial Statement on University Funding: 2014/15 and 2015/16; Ministerial Statement on the Management and Utilisation of the Teaching Development Grants, 2013; White Paper for Post-School Education and Training: Building an Expanded, Effective and Integrated Post-School System, 2013; the Report of the Task Team on Higher Education Teaching Development Grants submitted to the Minister of Education in July 2008; the policy on Funding of Higher Education (2003); the National Plan for Higher Education (2001); the Education White Paper 3 – A programme for the Transformation of Higher Education (August 1997); and the Higher Education Act (1997).



Figure 1: Overview DHET Initiatives and their relation to topics

| Name | Major focus | Enhancing academics as teachers | Scholarship of teaching | Standards assessment accreditation | Pedagogical competencies | Professional development |
|---|--|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Teaching Development Grant | Improve quality of teaching to enhance student success | √ | √ | | √ | √ |
| Priority Programmes for the academic years 2014 to 2016 | 4 programs supported by TDG | √ | √ | | √ | √ |
| University Priority Programmes | Infrastructure, equipment and resource support | √ | √ | | √ | √ |
| University Capacity Development Grant | Consolidation of functions served by the TDG and RDG | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |



2.1.1 Teaching Development Grant

The “main purpose of teaching development grants is to enable the implementation of teaching and learning development activities that will lead to improvement in student success... Teaching development grants complement and support the teaching output sub-block grant. Any improvement in actual teaching outputs as a result of teaching development funding is to the benefit of a university” (DHET, 2013:14).

“The Teaching Development Grant (TDG) is a funding mechanism to improve student success and enhance student learning through a sustained focus on improving the quality and impact of university teachers, teaching and teaching resources” (Ministerial Policy Statement, 2013:5). The CHE’s Quality Enhancement Project (QEP) operationally defines student success as follows: “Enhanced student learning with a view to increasing the number of graduates with attributes that are personally, professionally and socially valuable” (CHE, 2014:1). The TDG will support universities focusing on the development of teachers, teaching and teaching resources in order to contribute to the achievement of improved learning outcome targets, and supporting the development of new academics.

The TDG aims to contribute to the achievement of targets agreed between university Councils and the Ministry as set out in the Ministerial Statement on Enrolment Planning. This Ministerial Statement on the Management and Utilisation of Teaching Development Grants puts in place a set of policy guidelines to govern the use of teaching development grants. Each University submits a Teaching Development Plan to DHET. Funds are then transferred to the University on the basis of an approved TDG plan. The funds may only be used as set out in the plan approved by DHET.

Activities that are funded through the TDG must be designed to contribute directly to the achievement of institutional learning outcome targets. “The TDG must be seen as one of the levers that support the DHET’s broader strategy to improve student success rates, graduation rates and throughput rates at universities. This takes recognisance of the qualifications and experience of academic staff as well as the teaching and research infrastructure and equipment” (Delivery Agreement 5 Document:43).

Each university was required to develop a systematic, coordinated and structured Teaching Development Plan for the 2014 to 2016 academic years that had enhanced student success as its main purpose.

Collaborative Programmes

The TDG further provides for grant support for national collaborative programmes that will assist to achieve the purpose of the TDG in accordance with the ‘White Paper for Post-School Education and Training’ which stated that “support and recognition must be provided for national, cross-institutional and collaborative initiatives in the improvement of teaching and learning” (DHET, 2013:33)

Examples of such collaborative activities include:

- joint research/research & development projects (for example projects examining reasons for student failure);
- lecturer professional development activities, including the professional development of early career or ‘new generation’ academics;
- joint curriculum development projects that have a professional development aspect attached to them;
- projects focusing on blended- and e-learning approaches; and collaborative projects linked to the QEP.



The National Collaboration Teaching Development Grant to South African Universities of Technology is a good example of this type of support. The project “Attaining graduate attributes in Universities of Technology through ‘strategic teaching’ intends to “implement an innovative approach (‘Strategic Teaching’) that has been used successfully by certain Universities of Technology internationally to achieve distinctive teaching and, through this, realize key attributes and outcomes in graduating students” (Staak, 2015:2).

2.1.2 Priority Programmes for the academic years 2014 to 2016

In line with current national and institutional priorities for higher education, the following four programmes were prioritised for support through the TDG in the 2014 to 2016 academic years:

- Development of university teachers and teaching:

Teaching at universities encompasses under- and post-graduate teaching, including the competences required to supervise Post-graduate student research effectively. The TDG was therefore utilised to develop teaching competence at all levels of the university. Fostering educational expertise was expected to be a central goal for TDG (DoE, 2008).

- Student support through tutorship and mentorship programmes linked to the development of a new generation of academics:

Tutorship and mentorship programmes have a dual purpose: to enable small group teaching, viable learning communities and collaborative work as a necessary teaching and learning approach which all students will benefit from; and serves as a context for the identification, recruitment and initial development of potential new academics.

- Enhancing the status of teaching, and teaching and learning development at universities:

The teaching development grant should be used to assist with the prioritisation, profiling and incentivising of teaching as a valuable and valued activity within universities. This could be achieved by, *inter alia*, actively engaging academics in researching and developing their teaching.

- Research, teaching and learning:

It is recognised that teaching and learning development will benefit hugely when activities are evidence-based and draw on a sound knowledge base. Therefore research that focuses on teaching and learning, for example, to understand why students experience difficulties; research that is directed towards understanding the impact of teaching and learning interventions; or interventions being implemented through use of the TDG, would be supported through the TDG.

(See also the Ministerial Statements on University Funding: 2014/15 and 2015/16, and 2016/17 and 2017/18; Ministerial Statement on the Management and Utilisation of the Teaching Development Grants, 2014; and Ministerial Statement on the Management and Utilisation of the Teaching Development Grants, 2013).

2.1.3 University Priority Programmes

There are other university programmes and/or activities that could justifiably be characterised as teaching development activities which are not adequately captured in the programmes described above. Examples of such programmes and/or activities include:

- appropriate infrastructure,
- equipment and resources that supports and enhances teaching,
- curriculum development, and



- academic development and support for students.

The CHE has initiated the QEP referred to in Section 2.2.1 and the proposed focus areas within the QEP resonate strongly with the TDG priority programmes for the 2014 to 2016 academic years. Strong possibilities therefore existed to include QEP activities within the university's Teaching Development Plan, and so utilise TDG funds to support these activities.

2.1.4 Implementation of the University Capacity Development Programme through effective Management and Utilisation of the University Capacity Development Grant 2018 – 2020

Following a recommendation from the recently concluded review on Higher Education funding, the Ministerial Statement on University Funding: 2016/17 and 2017/18 (DHET, 2015) indicates that from 2017/18, a single earmarked grant, named the University Capacity Development Grant (UCDG), will fund the implementation of the University Capacity Development Programme, and will replace the previous earmarked Teaching Development and Research Development Grants which were introduced in 2008/9. In 2017/18 the UCDG will total R900m (DHET, 2015:19).

The primary purpose of the TDG was to improve student success and enhance student learning through a sustained focus on improving the quality and impact of university teachers, teaching and teaching resources (DHET, 2013:16). The primary purpose of the RDG was to enhance the research capacity of universities and to improve research productivity through a focus on developing the research capabilities of academic staff in need of development in this area (DHET, 2013:18). The UCDG will continue these functions through a more rigorously and coherently structured national university capacity development programme.

The University Capacity Development Programme

The UCDG will enable capacity development in three focus areas, namely, student development; staff development and programme / curriculum development. Collaborative projects will be funded and awarded through a separate application process. Funding to support student development activities will include, *inter alia*, strengthening data analytics capacity, student advising, tutoring and mentoring programmes and supplemental instruction. Staff development for academics and professional staff, as well as career development opportunities for early career academics, new generation of academics (nGAP), mid-career and experienced academic staff will also be funded. The development and curricularisation of new programmes aimed at institutional, regional and national priorities will also receive funding. Most activities will be driven by universities, however, some will be coordinated at the national level.

2.2 Responses and Initiatives of and by the Council on Higher Education

The following documents have been provided by the CHE on the Quality Enhancement Project: Framework for Institutional Quality Enhancement in the Second Period of Quality Assurance, January 2014; Quality Enhancement Project: The Process for Public Higher Education Institutions, January 2014. Further documents available from the CHE in support of or supplementing the project are: Learning to Teach in Higher Education in South Africa



(2017); South African Higher Education Reviewed - Two Decades of Democracy, May 2016; Content Analysis of the Baseline Institutional Submissions for Phase 1 of the Quality Enhancement Project, May 2015; and, External Evaluation Report of the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) of the Council on Higher Education, South Africa. 2009

2.2.1 Quality Enhancement Project

2.2.1.1 Background of the Quality Enhancement Project

“The Quality Enhancement Project (QEP) is a five-year project of the CHE, focused on the improvement of teaching and learning in both public and private Higher Education institutions carried out in parallel processes” (CHE, 2015:11). The QEP followed on from the comprehensive decade-long programme of institutional audits by the HEQC of the CHE of universities and a number of private Higher Education institutions, to assess and assure their quality in three core areas, research, teaching and learning and community engagement. “As in other audit processes elsewhere, the audits helped to initiate the development of quality assurance systems within institutions, put the improvement of teaching and learning on institutional agendas, reinforced institutional leaders in their efforts to develop institution-wide quality cultures, and offered visible confirmation to the public that attention is being paid to academic quality assurance” (David Dill (2000 in Harvey and Williams, 2010: 8)). “Furthermore ... the self-evaluation report required as part of the audit process was seen by many institutions as the main benefit of the external quality procedures” (CHE, 2015:11).

The audits put teaching and learning on the agenda, however, they also revealed that much work towards improving quality in teaching and learning was needed, given the context of a predominantly undergraduate Higher Education system with consistently poor throughput rates. In addition, an external evaluation of the HEQC in 2008 recommended that more emphasis needed to be placed on the enhancement aspect of external quality assurance in the suite of programmes it offered (CHE, 2015:12). The time was thus ripe for a concerted focus on the improvement of teaching and learning by the CHE. In an extensive process of reflection and consultation towards the conclusion of the first cycle of audits, the CHE decided not to pursue a second cycle of quality audits immediately, but to suspend them for a period.

Drawing on the suggestion that quality assurance policies are more effective in contributing to improvement when they foster the development of ‘social capital’, both within and between academic institutions, the QEP was conceptualized as a considered response to this challenge. By the end of the second phase of the QEP, it is anticipated that a number of areas relating to teaching and learning will have been considered in a holistic way in an effort to improve students’ access with success. “The QEP represents a start in the journey towards a more equitable, effective, transformative and successful undergraduate experience for our students” (Denyse Webbstock, Background to Quality Enhancement Project, January 2014).

The QEP, which replaced institutional audits in the second cycle of quality assurance, is the CHE’s response to addressing the challenge of low throughput in Higher Education.

The aim of the Quality Enhancement Project (QEP) is to improve student success both at individual Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and in the higher education sector as a whole. For the purposes of the QEP, student success is defined as: Enhanced student learning with a view to increasing the number of graduates with attributes that are personally, professionally and socially valuable

The goals of the QEP are: Improving the quality of undergraduate educational provision; Improving the number of quality graduates; developing a higher



education system that is improving continuously as Members of the higher education community collaborate to share good practices and solve shared problems.

(CHE, 2014:1)

With the change in approach in the second period of quality assurance from comprehensive institutional audits to mechanisms for improving teaching and learning, the CHE's focus shifted from quality assurance to quality enhancement. In a quality enhancement framework, the focus is on deliberate, continuous, systematic and measurable improvement. The purpose of the QEP is to help bring about improvements in teaching and learning at the level of both the Higher Education sector as a whole and of the individual institutions of which it is comprised (CHE, 2014).

2.2.1.2 Focus of the Quality Enhancement Project

The focus of the QEP is improving student success. The strategic aim being to ensure that HE institutions work together to develop, foster and embed a culture of quality enhancement in learning and teaching, through effective partnerships involving staff, students and other stakeholders. Student learning enhanced with a view to increasing the number of graduates with attributes that are personally, professionally and socially valuable (CHE, 2014).

It is envisaged that the QEP will comprise two phases of approximately two years each. In each phase, a small number of focus areas related to specific aspects of student success will be chosen for institutional and collective engagement. Towards the end of the first phase, institutions will submit reports on how they have brought about, or plan to bring about, improvements in the chosen focus areas. They will then receive individual feedback, based on their initial submissions and subsequent reports, in which both good practices and areas for improvement will be identified. A second phase will follow, centred on new focus areas.

During the first cycle of institutional audits, a number of issues were identified that affect student success. These issues may be grouped into the following seven factors:

1. Teaching
2. Curriculum
3. Assessment
4. Learning resources
5. Student enrolment management
6. Academic student support and development
7. Non-academic support and development

It was not feasible to address all seven areas simultaneously in the first phase of the QEP. Further analysis of the audit reports, together with research on international trends and consultation with a range of stake-holders, led to a clustering of these areas into four focus areas that formed the starting point for institutional engagement in the QEP. For the most part, the chosen focus areas deal with issues at institutional level rather than the level of individual departments or lecturers. In order to make progress at both a sector level and at the level of individual institutions, institutions will be requested to engage with the selected areas.

The four focus areas for Phase 1 are:

1. Enhancing academics as teachers



2. Enhancing student support and development
3. Enhancing the learning environment
4. Enhancing course and programme enrolment management.

Relevant to this project is focus area 1 - Enhancing academics as teachers (Including professional development, reward and recognition, workload, conditions of service and performance appraisal).



3. Similar Initiatives in Europe

3.1 Introduction

In order to put the opportunities and challenges concerning the professional development of academics as teachers in Higher Education in South Africa in context, it is useful to also understand what has been happening in European Higher Education in the past few years and the various activities, initiatives, trends and challenges within the European university sector and other related organisations in respect of improving and strengthening the quality of university teaching in their respective countries / institutions / organisations.

3.2 Challenges facing Higher Education in Europe

National governments are responsible for their education and training systems and individual universities organise their own curricula. However, the challenges facing Higher Education are similar across the EU and there are clear advantages in working together.

Higher Education and its links with research and innovation plays a crucial role in individual and societal development and in providing the highly-skilled human capital and the articulate citizens that Europe needs to create jobs, economic growth, and prosperity. Higher Education institutions are crucial partners in delivering the European Union's strategy to drive forward and maintain growth. The Europe 2020 strategy has set a target that by 2020, 40% of young Europeans should have a Higher Education qualification.

3.3 What is the European Commission doing?

The European Commission (EC) is an institution of the European Union, responsible for proposing legislation, implementing decisions, upholding the EU treaties and managing the day-to-day business of the EU. However, the EU does not have any formal competencies regarding Higher Education. These remain in the auspices of the member states. Nevertheless, the EU Commission is funding and supporting activities that promote mobility of students, Higher Education reforms and labour-market related activities. In addition, it issues recommendations, which are not legally binding. Thereby it encourages cooperation between member states.

The EC works closely with policy-makers to support the development of Higher Education policies in EU countries in line with the Education and Training 2020 strategy (ET2020). The June 2013 report to the European Commission of the High Level Group on Modernisation of Higher Education, entitled 'Improving the Quality of Teaching and Learning in Europe's Higher Education Institutions' fixes five key priorities for Higher Education in the EU:

- increasing the number of Higher Education graduates
- improving the quality and relevance of teaching and learning
- promoting mobility of students and staff and cross-border cooperation
- strengthening the 'knowledge triangle', linking education, research, and innovation
- creating effective governance and funding mechanisms for Higher Education

In order to ensure that these aims are met the EU is also developing and supporting tools to promote mobility (such as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System



[ECTS] and the Diploma Supplement), increase the recognition of skills and qualifications, and provide better information about Higher Education in Europe. The Commission also provides support to the Bologna Process, a pan-European initiative designed to promote Higher Education reform that led to the establishment of the European Higher Education Area. The Commission furthermore promotes the exchange of good policy practices between different countries through the ET2020 Higher Education working group.

In addition to managing the Erasmus+ programme, which provides a variety of opportunities to Higher Education students, the Commission is also supporting international cooperation initiatives in Higher Education with countries outside the EU.

3.4 University Teacher Competence in Europe

Traditionally in Europe, though teaching has been the core of university activities, teaching competencies of university teachers have not been considered as an intrinsic element in either the employment or the promotion processes. It has been the understanding that research activities are the predominant criterion to judge whether university teachers are of high calibre. Unlike in primary and secondary education, where extensive requirements exist, it has been the assumption that a good researcher will also be a good teacher and hence it would not be appropriate to suggest otherwise and to require university level teachers to undergo any professional training in relation to their teaching competencies.

However, this notion has become a matter of concern, both at the level of the European Union and in individual countries. The EU has given a prominent place for the advocacy for a change of perspectives and subsequent action in its 2013 High Level Group report on the Modernisation of Higher Education. Individual countries have started initiatives in the last two decades to develop more systematic approaches to placing more emphasis on university teacher competencies. The Report of the High Level Group concluded with several recommendations, including:

- Every institution should develop and implement a strategy for the support and on-going improvement of the quality of teaching and learning, devoting the necessary level of human and financial resources to the task, and integrating this priority in its overall mission, giving teaching due parity with research.
- All staff teaching in Higher Education institutions in 2020 should have received certified pedagogical training. Continuous professional education as teachers should become a requirement for teachers in the Higher Education sector.
- Academic staff entrance, progression and promotion decisions should take account of an assessment of teaching performance alongside other factors
- Heads of institutions and institutional leaders should recognise and reward (e.g. through fellowships or awards) Higher Education teachers who make a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching and learning, whether through their practice, or through their research into teaching and learning.

It might be argued that this is a belated response to the massification of Higher Education and the ensuing diversification of the student body. The concept of student-centred learning has gained significant attention as a new policy paradigm and became one of the major features to ensure success of the reforms associated with the Bologna Process.

In the following, developments and initiatives in selected European countries are outlined. In particular three countries are presented in more detail. These cover the United Kingdom, Sweden and the Netherlands. These developments have to be understood, however, in the general context of the respective countries, both in terms of the maturity of their Higher Education system, and their general culture of how Higher Education is perceived.



Initiatives in selected other countries are also presented. However, in most cases any initiatives are not institutionalised or are in the process of development.

Austria

In Austria, there are some initiatives to award prizes to individuals on the basis of good or excellent teaching. These can be national level awards or awards within individual universities. However, similar to Germany, there are no requirements for professional development courses of university teaching staff. University teachers are promoted on the basis of their achievements in the area of research.

Belgium

The Belgian Higher Education system is divided between the Dutch speaking Flemish part and the French-Speaking Community. Hence, different regulations are in place to govern the Higher Education system.

In neither of the communities is there a national regulation regarding the pedagogical skills and competences of university teachers. However, in the French-speaking Community, a provision of the law governing Higher Education foresees that universities should use 10% of their basic public funding to promote teaching excellence. This included a requirement to set up centres that focus on courses providing didactical competences and skills.

In Flanders, each university is deciding their own approach to promoting better pedagogy. In some universities there are no requirements in terms of their teaching staff whereas in others there can be a compulsory university teacher training programme as a prerequisite for tenure. Generally, Flanders is cooperating to a large extent with the Netherlands. Hence, the courses developed by universities can oftentimes be recognised as the Dutch UTQ courses. The universities are even eligible to gaining the official status of awarding the Dutch UTQ courses.

Denmark

In Denmark, it is compulsory for assistant professors to undertake pedagogical courses. Yet, there are no national standards regarding the courses, their outcomes, length, etc. Hence, the courses are offered by the individual universities who set the curriculum for the courses. Nevertheless, due to informal exchange between the educational departments at the universities about the underlying concepts and approaches, similarity can be found between the courses offered. This facilitates the recognition of the courses taken when university teachers move between universities.

Estonia

Estonia follows a similar model as Finland with making a distinction between university level teaching and teaching at other levels, including the polytechnic sector. For the university sector, no specific pedagogical courses are required. Yet, as part of Doctoral Degrees, most universities would include a short programme of about 150-180 hours of workload that would include pedagogical aspects.

Finland

In Finland, a pedagogical training of one-year full-time equivalent is required from any teaching staff, starting at Kindergarten level up to Polytechnics on the basis of national legislation. However, this is not required for teaching in universities. Nevertheless, universities have started offering courses since the early 1990s and make it a strong recommendation for any teaching staff to undergo a training course in pedagogy, which



requires a workload of about 250-300 hours. Some universities even offer – and expect their staff – to take the one-year course. In addition, some universities make it a formal requirement to take an introductory course for newly-appointed teaching staff.

A network for pedagogy at university level has been created (PedaNet), which serves as an informal meeting place to address the content, learning outcomes, structures of the courses offered by the different universities, in order to facilitate recognition and to promote good practice. Therefore, the courses offered by different universities are broadly similar.

France

In France, the need for improvement of pedagogical skills of university teachers has been identified as an element to contribute to a wider national strategy for the enhancement of Higher Education. The major shortcoming that had been identified was the lack of innovative pedagogical initiatives. Therefore, within the framework of the national Higher Education strategy, specific areas to support reforms have been highlighted. In particular, the integration of digital resources into learning, teaching and assessment methodologies has been identified. France wishes to ensure a systematic use of digital resources in learning programmes. In addition, France is suggesting to create pedagogical teams combining teaching, administrative, technical, and library staff as well as information scientists.

Furthermore, France suggests that more attention is given to the concept of student-driven education, whereby students should be able to include project-based learning or non-formal learning activities as part of their curriculum amounting to up to 25% of the credits required for a qualification. Overall, the approach in France is to allow for more experimentation to identify suitable pedagogical means. Hence, universities are encouraged to start thinking outside-the-box and creating more flexible modes of study and pathways. In order to raise the status of teaching (as opposed to research), France suggests to allocate positions at the French University Institute to teaching staff who showcased outstanding achievements with regard to pedagogical innovation. All these initiatives are, however, still at the planning stage.

Germany

In Germany there are no requirements regarding pedagogical skills and competences of university teachers. There have been a few initiatives, either regionally or nationally, to promote the concept of “excellence in teaching”, but compared to similar initiatives in the area of research, these are almost negligible. Usually, there are awards given to individual teachers for their teaching performance. However, this is based on what they do and should promote the spreading of good practice. But there is no broad concept of offering courses that allow university teachers to professionally develop. University teachers are promoted on the basis of their achievements in the area of research.

Ireland

In Ireland, there are no national requirements regarding the pedagogical preparedness of university teaching staff. However, some universities are offering professional development courses for their teaching staff. These are usually offered as a Post-graduate Certificate degree programme, which is usually part-time and may include components of blended learning. Teaching Staff have to pay fees for these courses. The courses also follow the concept of the teaching staff maintaining a portfolio and using reflection techniques.



Italy

In Italy, there is no national approach to raise the quality of pedagogical competences of university teachers. Some individual universities have started projects that aim to improve pedagogical competences and also few universities cooperate on that matter in networks. In one of these networks, a dedicated teaching and learning centre has been established that is supposed to undertake research into didactics and assessment, undertake professional development courses for teaching staff, promote innovation in pedagogical methodologies and to contribute to a new level of professionalism of teaching staff. The centre aims at interlink the activities in these areas. Currently, activities have started in the research area.

In addition, as part of the current strategic priorities for Higher Education, the ministry of education has outlined that more focus should be given to support student-centred learning. To support university initiatives financially, a call has been launched, which has been very well-perceived by the sector and many universities have applied with their projects to enhance student-centred learning, which include components of how to improve the pedagogical competences of university teachers. However, the call is currently in the selection phase and no information about the projects is publicly available.

Sweden

Sweden has placed a major emphasis on the need for pedagogical training for university teachers as a means to foster better learning opportunities for students and as part of an understanding that the quality of study programmes depends on the capacity of teachers.

Systematic inclusion as part of the Higher Education system started in 1992 with the elaboration of criteria for pedagogical competence that were suggested by the Commission of Inquiry on Higher Education. It was suggested that pedagogical competences should be regarded as important as academic competencies and be appropriately assessed.

Sweden has undergone various stages of ensuring that university teachers have the required set of skills and competences for their teaching duties. Initially, it became compulsory at national level in 2002 and required any teaching to complete the “Compulsory Higher Education Teacher Training” (CHETT).

Yet, the CHETT was offered by the institutions themselves and no regulations were made as regards the volume of such a qualification or how it would be organised. However, the initial criteria from 1992 formed the basis for the training. Subsequently intended learning outcomes were suggested on the basis of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning approach. It was also agreed that the CHETT would require ten weeks of workload. The Swedish state provided funding for the development of courses leading to the CHETT.

With a new law in 2010 that gave greater autonomy to universities, also the CHETT requirements were abolished as a compulsory feature. Since then, most universities themselves have made it compulsory for any teaching staff to undergo formal training of normally between five and ten weeks duration in order to qualify for tenure-track. In most cases these courses were the same ones as they had previously offered when it was compulsory. Some universities have opted for different models, which differentiate between staff's involvement in teaching and research.

The focus for the requirement of undergoing pedagogical training courses is on newly appointed university teachers. There are no such requirements for university teachers who have already been tenured. Whilst this is an aspect that in the long run will become irrelevant, in the current situation, it is not addressing potential pedagogical deficiencies of older generations of university teachers. Likewise, it does not ensure that doctoral students and adjunct professors have the necessary pedagogical preparation even though they



commonly engage in teaching activities. Therefore, some universities have made it a requirement that also these groups undergo a training programme. Nevertheless, this is not consistently implemented and the training programme is also normally more limited in its scope, at least in the case of doctoral students.

The Swedish Association of Higher Education (SUHF) has issued a recommendation, on the basis of a proposal made by SWEDNET, the Swedish network for educational development in Higher Education on teachers' practice, which to some extent included pedagogical competencies. The recommendations were amended after the legal requirement for university teachers to undergo Higher Education pedagogy courses was removed and placed in the remit of individual universities.

The aim of the recommendation is to ensure that universities have a common approach to pedagogical training with a view of facilitating the recognition of such training at other universities.

According to this recommendation, the qualification offered for university teachers should:

- have a duration of 10 weeks
- focus on enabling teachers to better plan, teach and evaluate student achievement
- allow university teachers to critically reflect on their teaching practices
- enable university teachers to explain their research to a more general public
- include an independent pedagogical project in the subject area of the university teacher
- lead to a better understanding of the rules and regulations related to the teaching and research duties
- be based on pedagogical research, including relevant pedagogical literature.

Since these recommendations are broad in nature, the courses offered by universities differ to some extent in terms of structure, content and methods. Some universities opted to break down the course into smaller modules, including elective components, which are to be taken within a specified timeframe.

Yet, all Swedish universities offer pedagogical courses for their staff. The strong competition for a university lecturer position and for promotion also made the professional development courses quasi compulsory due to the selection criteria used, which include the demonstration of pedagogical skills.

Universities require that pedagogical qualifications are presented in a pedagogical portfolio. Assessment of the pedagogical competencies focuses on

- Teaching skills
- Theoretical knowledge

Some universities have included their pedagogical requirements into a wider strategy aimed at fostering quality in teaching. These strategies take into account already acquired pedagogical skills during the recruitment process, an individualised action plan for further development of the pedagogical skills and the teaching performance as a indicator for the salary negotiations.

Universities have set up different award systems to underpin the importance placed on pedagogical competences. In some cases, merits are awarded that are directly linked to financial incentives, in some cases both for the individual and for the institute at which they are working.



The Netherlands

In 2008, a national basic teaching qualification was introduced in the Netherlands. Since then, new members of teaching staff are required to obtain the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ) within three years after commencement of employment. This applies to both permanent and temporary staff, either part-time or full-time.

The UTQ are offered by individual universities. In 2008 the universities signed a mutual recognition agreement to ensure that the qualifications are recognised across the Netherlands. Hence qualified university teachers do not require any further testing when moving to a different university. Since 2011 an agreement is in place between the Ministry of Education and the Association of Universities in the Netherlands supporting the UTQ.

The recognition agreement stipulated criteria for the contents of the qualification, the assessment methods and institutional procedures for the UTQ.

The UTQ is considered as a proof of didactic and pedagogical competencies and is normally offered by a dedicated department within each faculty. Due to the recognition agreement, the qualifications are, however, nearly identical. Yet, the assessment procedures might differ from one provider to another.

The qualification covers the didactic aspects of:

- execution of teaching
- development of teaching
- assessment of students
- evaluation of teaching
- coaching of students
- organisation

In addition, it is required to show sufficient capacity for further professional development.

It is considered as an important feature of the qualifications that discipline specific traditions are appropriately reflected in the professional development courses. Hence, a UTQ qualification consists of generic and institution specific requirements for lecturers. Therefore, also the courses offered have shifted from being developed and offered at university level to that of individual faculties.

Lecturers are assessed by their UTQ portfolio, which not only includes courses, assignments and participation in group work. Teaching staff are also offered more individualised programmes based on their teaching experience. Some universities offer fast-track intensive courses that are aimed at teaching staff who already have significant teaching experience.

Most universities in the Netherlands have made it compulsory for their staff to obtain a UTQ qualification. As a further incentive for universities in the Netherlands to ensure their teaching staff take such a qualification, the percentage of staff members with a UTQ qualification has been included into performance indicators, which determine the level of funding for the universities.

Hence, universities are strongly encouraged that not only new staff obtain a UTQ qualification, but also already tenured staff undertake this form of professional development.



United Kingdom

Higher Education in the United Kingdom and particularly in England has been moving away from the notion of being a public good. Universities receive very limited public funding for their teaching activities and have to rely on tuition fees. Hence, competition for students became severe and the notion of a high quality “student experience” became a crucial factor for the decisions of students at which university to study. This was a trend that was further supported by national initiatives, such as the introduction of the National Student Satisfaction Survey (NSS), which is gaining similar importance as traditional, research-based, rankings and league-tables.

This ultimately resulted in the development of a national framework for teachers in Higher Education. The Higher Education Academy (HEA), in cooperation with universities, in 2011 developed professional standards aimed at improving the student learning experience. This is known as “The UK Professional Standards Framework” (UKPSF). The aims of this framework are that it:

1. Supports the initial and continuing professional development of staff engaged in teaching and supporting learning
2. Fosters dynamic approaches to teaching and learning through creativity, innovation and continuous development in diverse academic and/or professional settings
3. Demonstrates to students and other stakeholders the professionalism that staff and institutions bring to teaching and support for student learning
4. Acknowledges the variety and quality of teaching, learning and assessment practices that support and underpin student learning
5. Facilitates individuals and institutions in gaining formal recognition for quality-enhanced approaches to teaching and supporting learning, often as part of wider responsibilities that may include research and/or management activities

(taken from: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/downloads/uk_professional_standards_framework.pdf).

The framework foresees that university teachers should possess core knowledge and professional values that are applied into 5 main areas of activities.

The areas of activity relate to:

1. Design and plan learning activities and/or programmes of study
2. Teach and/or support learning
3. Assess and give feedback to learners
4. Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance
5. Engage in continuing professional development in subjects/disciplines and their pedagogy, incorporating research, scholarship and the evaluation of professional practices

The core knowledge aspects referred to are:

1. The subject material
2. Appropriate methods for teaching, learning and assessing in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme
3. How students learn, both generally and within their subject/ disciplinary area(s)
4. The use and value of appropriate learning technologies



5. Methods for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching

6. The implications of quality assurance and quality enhancement for academic and professional practice with a particular focus on teaching

The professional values that university teachers should possess are to:

1. Respect individual learners and diverse learning communities
2. Promote participation in Higher Education and equality of opportunity for learners
3. Use evidence-informed approaches and the outcomes from research, scholarship and continuing professional development
4. Acknowledge the wider context in which Higher Education operates recognising the implications for professional practice

Based on the areas of activity, the core knowledge and the professional values, the UKPSF is made up of four descriptors, which set out specific criteria for the attainment of an official status of corresponding four levels of HEA fellowship.

These four levels correspond to different stages of experience in university teaching ranging from those who support teaching “to senior professionals with strategic impact on teaching and learning in an organisational, national and/or international setting.”

The HEA itself does not offer any courses leading to the certification of the fellowships. Applicants have to provide evidence of their personal professional practice and demonstrate how they meet the criteria in terms of knowledge, skills and behaviours.

However, many universities are offering their own qualifications, often Post-graduate certificates that are to equip university teachers with the right set of knowledge, skills and behaviours. These qualifications are normally accredited by the HEA.

Whilst there is also no national requirement to undergo such professional training, many universities require a distinct professional qualification for full-time lecturers. They have made it a requirement of contractual probation, or for promotion and career advancement by taking it into account during the annual appraisal process. Furthermore, some universities also use further incentives to encourage their teaching staff to undergo professional development courses.

Nevertheless universities are required to provide information on how many of their teachers obtained such a qualification. They have to publish such data annually, also as a means for students to make their decision on where to study.

The UKPSF has been built on an earlier initiative by the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA). SEDA continues to offer qualifications related to teaching competencies, which are accredited by Higher Education Academy and mapped against the UKPSF. These courses provide an alternative for the qualifications offered by universities themselves.

With the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework by the Higher Education Funding Council for England further pressure is created for universities to fully engage in professional development activities. The framework uses data from the NSS results and rates universities into Gold, Silver and Bronze categories. This initiative is not uncontested and seen as a potential danger to justify further tuition fee hikes.



3.5 Overview of European approaches and focus

Figure 2: Overview of European approaches

| Country | Country follows a systematic approach | Enhancing academics as teachers | Scholarship of teaching | Standards assessment accreditation | Pedagogical competencies | Professional development |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Austria | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Belgium | x | √ | x | x | x | √ |
| Denmark | x | x | x | x | x | √ |
| Estonia | x | x | x | x | x | √ |
| Finland | x | √ | x | x | x | √ |
| France | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Germany | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| Ireland | x | x | x | x | x | √ |
| Italy | x | √ | x | x | x | √ |
| Netherlands | √ | √ | x | √ | √ | √ |
| Sweden | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| UK | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |



3.6 Conclusion

The concept of systematic professional development and national or institutional requirements regarding the pedagogical skills and competences of university teachers is still not a widespread phenomenon throughout the European Union. Different countries have different approaches. Many countries are not engaged in any activities in this regard. The countries with the most advanced and systematic approach to improve the teaching abilities of university teachers by formal pedagogical courses are the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Courses offered can differ in nature. Some countries offer specific Post-graduate Certificate level courses. Others offer shorter courses, usually by the educational departments or units. When Post-graduate courses are offered, they are not compulsory and usually charge fees for the individual teacher who would like to attempt them.

The overarching objective of the initiatives in different countries is the same: to ensure higher quality in university level teaching. Yet, the rationale why the initiatives have been undertaken differs to some extent. In the United Kingdom, it is considered to be a decisive factor for a student's choice of a university, hence it is a more competitive, market-driven, approach. In Sweden, it is considered more as an important feature of a modernisation of the overall approach to a student-centred learning approach. In the Netherlands, it combines these two factors and focuses on a stronger professionalisation of the teaching components at universities. Therefore, any system for the upscaling of pedagogical competences of university teachers should be reflected upon in terms of the wider system-level reforms and become adjusted to serving these purposes in the best manner possible. The system for pedagogical training needs to fit in the particular context.

Whilst these initiatives add value and increase the perception of the importance of teaching, the predominant perception of what a 'good university professor' is about, remains still largely associated with their research performance. That is in part also due to the fact that it is more easily quantifiable whether good research is undertaken, using peer review approaches as built-in mechanisms in all aspects that relate to academic merit.

Therefore, it is important to ensure that a system to enhance the pedagogical skills and competences of university teachers is underpinned by a system of appropriate assessment and documentation. A typical CV does not normally enable university teachers to demonstrate their pedagogical qualities, as it entails a more quantitative list of merits. The initiatives show that the use of a portfolio can be very helpful in this regard and more adequate than simple tests. A portfolio better allows for document planning, implementation and evaluation of teaching practices. It further is an instrument of learning itself, as it requires university teachers to reflect about theories learned and what their practical implementation has shown. Portfolios also allow for a more personalised approach to be taken into account for further professional development. They can easily be complemented by interviews or test lectures. In order to become most useful, an agreement about the structure and content of portfolios is helpful, so that they can be easily compared and understood between different universities.

It is difficult to ensure that all university teachers undergo pedagogical professional development. The focus is on newly-appointed or -employed university teachers. This means a longer transition period until all university teachers have had some sort of pedagogical training. Also, it does not adequately address how university teachers will update their skills and competences over time, as systems evolve and new methods of learning and teaching will be integrated.



Therefore, initiatives that ensure that professional development of teaching pedagogy are not ridiculed or disregarded by older colleagues can be helpful. These could be incorporated into a wider system of incentives and motivation. Regardless of whether there are legal requirements to undergo pedagogical training at national or institutional level, incentives are important to ensure that the training is not simply a formal criterion, but that it fully exploited.

Incentives can range from recognition and awards to financial incentives for individuals and universities. However, it should also be taken into account that sufficient time is allocated for university teachers to undergo pedagogical training. Promotion criteria should also take into account the pedagogical achievements and not be solely based on research merits.

If there are no detailed national requirements regarding the pedagogical training, there should be a certain level of coordination between universities to ensure that pedagogical training courses are recognised if university teachers move to another institution.

Traditionally in Europe, though teaching has been the core of university activities, teaching competencies of university teachers have not been considered as an intrinsic element in either the employment or the promotion processes. It has been the understanding that research activities are the predominant criterion to judge whether university teachers are of high calibre. Unlike in primary and secondary education, where extensive requirements exist, it was assumed that a good researcher will also be a good teacher, and hence it would not be appropriate to suggest otherwise and to require university level teachers to undergo any professional training in relation to their teaching competencies.

However, this notion has become a matter of concern, both at the level of the European Union and in individual countries. The EU has given a prominent place for the advocacy of a change of perspectives and subsequent action in its 2013 High Level Group report on the Modernisation of Higher Education. Individual countries have started initiatives in the last two decades to develop more systematic approaches to placing more emphasis on university teacher competencies. The Report of the High Level Group concluded with several recommendations, including:

- Every institution should develop and implement a strategy for the support and on-going improvement of the quality of teaching and learning, devoting the necessary level of human and financial resources to the task, and integrating this priority in its overall mission, giving teaching due parity with research.
- All staff teaching in Higher Education institutions in 2020 should have received certified pedagogical training. Continuous professional education as teachers should become a requirement for teachers in the Higher Education sector.
- Academic staff entrance, progression and promotion decisions should take account of an assessment of teaching performance alongside other factors.
- Heads of institutions and institutional leaders should recognise and reward (e.g. through fellowships or awards) Higher Education teachers who make a significant contribution to improve the quality of teaching and learning, whether through their practice, or through their research into teaching and learning.



4. Responses, reactions, initiatives and activities in the South African Higher Education Sector

4.1 Introduction

The review of South African Higher Education paints a stark picture of the state of Higher Education in the twenty years after the democratic elections (CHE, 2016). It refers to problems experienced in teaching and learning as manifested in poor throughput and completion rates and questions the role that teaching and learning has played in forging an inclusive society with “equitable access to quality education for all sections of the population” (CHE, 2016:143). The review further points out that throughput and completion rates are problematic, and that graduate production remains very low. It expresses concern over the proportion of graduates who are completing their studies with marginal passes, and the unsatisfactory state of graduate outcomes. Failure and dropout on this scale is widely systemic in origin. The review concludes that “teaching and learning are simultaneously held to be: the key way in which higher education can address the inequalities of society; the solution to the country’s dire need for skills; an essential means to economic growth; and the path that holds out the most hope for individual social mobility and financial security” (CHE, 2016:143).

The DHET has in the past few years begun to prioritise the area of teaching and learning and the matter of professionalising teaching in Higher Education, especially through the current TDG. All the members of Focus Group 1, QEP, agreed on the strategic importance of the professionalisation of teaching and the development of university teachers in teaching and learning. The process of learning to teach, and the associated field of professional academic development for teaching, is absolutely central to Higher Education.

Between 2013 and 2016, DHET and CHE have liaised on a regular basis with universities to discuss various matters relating to improving the situation in Higher Education, the TDG and the QEP.

A number of books, articles and projects by DHET, CHE and South African academics have also been produced, published or embarked upon in the last few years to highlight, or offer support to the process, and which serve as a knowledge source or guide to institutions regarding the various aspects and concepts dealing with the teaching and learning and the enhancement of the quality of teaching in universities. For example, Strydom, Basson and Mentz’s “South African Survey of Student Engagement project of 2010, Enhancing the quality of teaching and learning”: Using student engagement data to establish a culture of evidence; editors Shirley Booth and Laurie Woollacott’s engagement with SoTL which has become important internationally and in many South African institutions: “The Scholarship Of Teaching And Learning In Higher Education: On its constitution and transformative potential”; the CHE’s, “Learning to Teach in Higher Education in South Africa”, and “South African Higher Education Reviewed - Two Decades of Democracy, May, 2016.” The latter publication provides a broad overview of the main trends and developments related to different aspects of Higher Education over the period reviewed, and intends to stimulate further debate and research towards informing future policy developments aimed at the transformation and quality enhancement of our Higher Education system. Brenda Leibowitz, Vivienne Bozalek and Peter Kahn’s “Theorising Learning to Teach in Higher Education” provides lecturers embarking on a career in Higher Education, and established members of staff, with the capacity to improve their teaching. These are examples of such works which academics can use to understand the various concepts and the issues



involved, and which can assist in their initiatives. The above and many more are contained in the list of references/further reading at the end of the report

4.2 Institutional Initiatives

The South African Public Higher Education Sector consists of 23 already-established universities and 3 newly-created universities launched since 2014. The newest learning institution, Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University, located north of Pretoria, was unveiled in April 2015, adding to the two launched in 2014, namely, Sol Plaatje University in the Northern Cape, and the University of Mpumalanga. The latter three are still too new to be involved in the above initiatives or to take part in the TDG.

South Africa's universities accommodate in excess of 1 million students, with plans by government to add 500,000 to that total by 2030. Figures to date show that 25 of the 26 universities have a combined total exceeding 600,000, while Unisa, with some 400,000 students, is the biggest tertiary institution in SA.

The country's universities are divided into the following categories: 6 Universities of Technology offering degree and diplomas focused on career-oriented education; 6 Comprehensive Universities offering a combination of academic and career-oriented diplomas and degrees; and 11 traditional universities offering theoretically-oriented university degrees. Pretoria is home to five universities; Cape Town has three universities, and another nearby in Stellenbosch. Johannesburg and Durban are serviced by three universities each while Bloemfontein and Limpopo have two each.

Most universities have responded in a variety of ways to enhance teaching and learning including the professional development of academics as teachers. A number offer, or have begun to develop, or are considering developing Post-Graduate Diplomas (PGDips) and Degrees in Higher Education aimed at their own staff or staff at other institutions who do not offer similar qualifications. Formal qualifications offered range from the Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education (PGDipHE), Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education and Training (PGDipHET); Post-Graduate Diploma in Education: Higher Education (PGipE:HE); Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education: Teaching and Learning (PGDipHE:T&L); Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education: Academic Development (PGDipHE:AD); and PGDip, Masters, PhD in Higher Education Studies and Educational Technology programmes. Some universities require/encourage their academic staff to take a few specified modules of the PGDip, or to gradually complete modules until they have completed the entire qualification. A non-formal SoTL Certificate is also offered at one of the universities which does not offer a PGDIP, but is in the process of developing one.

Many universities have developed short courses focusing on developing teaching. Examples include, a New Academic Practitioners' Programme (NAPP) and The Short Course on Teaching (TSCOT). Some institutions have regular staff development workshops or offer an Induction Programme and/or annual conferences focusing on teaching and learning, and international conferences on SoTL to develop their staff as university teachers. One university has created a Mentor/Mentee project for senior students and new academic staff, and yet another has assisted staff to develop ePortfolios to improve the chances of promotion for those who emphasise their teaching experience/qualifications/direction.

Finally, a number of universities provide teaching excellence awards and Vice-Chancellor's Teaching and Learning Excellence Awards to reward excellence and quality in teaching.



Institutional Initiatives in South Africa - Overview

Figure 3: Overview over institutional initiatives in South Africa

| Approach | Certificates, Diploma | Programmes | Institutions involved |
|--|---|--|--|
| Formal Qualification | Post-grad Diploma | PGDipHE | CUT, UFS, UJ, UKZN, MUT, NWU, UP, RU, UNISA, VUT, UNIZUL |
| | | PGDipE:HE | WITS |
| | | PGDHET | UFH, WSU |
| | | PGDipHE:T&L | CPUT, UJ, SUN, UWC |
| | PGDip, Master's, PhD in Higher Education Studies and Educational Technology | PGDip, M and PhD MEd and PhD in HE | UCT, UKZN |
| | | MPhil in HE | NWU |
| | | MEd Med and PhD | WSU WITS |
| NAPP | UCT | | |
| Vocational Teacher Education Programme | TUT | | |
| Non-Formal Qualifications | Teaching and Learning Certificate | Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Certificate (SoTLC) | NMMU |
| Short Courses | CHEC Short Courses for lecturers in 2017 | Teaching and learning in HE (TALHE) | CPUT, UCT, SUN, UWC |
| | | Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in HE | CPUT, UCT, SUN, UWC |
| | | Multimodal pedagogies and post-qualitative scholarship in HE teaching and learning | CPUT, UCT, SUN, UWC |
| | | Assessment in HE | CPUT, UCT, SUN, WC |
| | | Study on pedagogical competence of engineers | CPUT, UCT, SUN, UWC |
| | | TSCOT (The Short Course on Teaching) | UCT |
| | | Research Methods Short Learning Course | VUT |
| | | University Education Induction Progression [UEIP]) | |
| | | Multilingual developmental programmes | UKZN UL |
| | | Programmes/Training to meet Criteria for Probation and Promotion | |
| Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching & Learning consultancy and formal courses | RU | | |
| Teaching and learning interventions | NMMU | | |
| Staff Development: | | Workshops/ Conferences/Programmes Various topics and | UCT, CUT, DUT, UFH, UFS, UKZN, MUT, NMMU, UP, SUN, UNIVEN, WSU |



| | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | interventions | |
| Induction Programmes | | Different programmes | DUT, UFH, UKZN, NMMU, UP, TUT, WSU |
| Mentor / Mentee project/programmes | | | CUT, DUT |
| Portfolios for promotion/university teachers seeking to advance their professional careers | | Portfolio for Promotion | UJ, SUN |
| | | ePortfolios | CPUT, UCT, SUN, UWC |
| Teaching and Learning Excellence Awards | | | CHE/HELTASA, NMMU, SUN, WSU |

Figure 4: Abbreviations Overview

| | | | |
|----------------|--|---------------|---------------------------------|
| CHE | Council on Higher Education | UFS | University of the Free State |
| CPUT | Cape Peninsula University of Technology | UJ | University of Johannesburg |
| CUT | Central University of Technology | UKZN | University of KwaZulu-Natal |
| DUT | Durban University of Technology | UL | University of Limpopo |
| HELTASA | Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of SA | UNISA | University of South Africa |
| MUT | Mangosuthu University of Technology | UNIVEN | University of Venda |
| NMMU | Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University | UNIZUL | University of Zululand |
| NWU | North-West University | UP | University of Pretoria |
| RU | Rhodes University | UWC | University of the Western Cape |
| SUN | Stellenbosch University | VUT | Vaal University of Technology |
| TUT | Tshwane University of Technology | WSU | Walter Sisulu University |
| UCT | University of Cape Town | WITS | University of the Witwatersrand |
| UFH | University of Fort Hare | | |

4.3 Formal Qualifications

4.3.1 Post-Graduate Diplomas and Degrees

4.3.1.1 Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education (PGDipHE)

A number of universities have come to realise that the common once-off training and development workshops, and induction workshops are less effective in enhancing teaching, as opposed to more structured and assessed courses such as Post-Graduate Diploma programmes in Higher Education that enable a longer-term, sustained engagement with issues of teaching and learning, and consequently cumulative learning.

At **Central University of Technology (CUT)** all lecturing staff must enrol for at least two modules (Learning Facilitation and Assessment) offered by the University of the Free State's Centre for Higher Education Studies as part of their PGDipHE. More recently the institution has taken a decision to develop its own PGDipHE which will address the needs of its lecturing staff, as well as those working at other universities of technology, and institutions which have similar contexts and needs. The development of this programme is in its final stages and will shortly be submitted to DHET and CHE for approval and accreditation.

From 2005 to date, a total of 247 permanent academic staff have registered for the PGDipHE modules at UFS, with 206 completing the two modules and 25 completing the PGDipHE at RU. In addition, 25 have completed a Master's, and 3 a PhD in Higher



Education at RU. Currently CUT has 292 permanent academic staff which means that 84.6% of staff have participated in programmes offered to develop their teaching.

The **University of the Free State (UFS)** offers the PGDipHE aimed at academic staff, however, since the qualification is new none of the registered staff have yet completed the qualification. In both 2016 and 2017, seven academic staff registered for the qualification.

At **University of Johannesburg (UJ)** the PGDipHE is a new two-year, part-time qualification with a first intake in 2016 of 6 academics. In 2017, 8 participants enrolled in the programme. There have not yet been any graduants in the programme.

The **University of KwaZulu-Natal's (UKZN)** Higher Education Training and Development Unit offers the PGDipHE. Staff Enrolments for 2013 were 2, with 1 each in 2014, 2015 and 2017, and 4 in 2016. In 2017 staff enrolled for various modules were as follows: Teaching and Learning: 19; Assessing Learning: 20; and Supervising Research: 11.

At **Mangosuthu University of Technology's (MUT)** efforts are directed towards offering academic staff the opportunity to register for the PGDipHE which is funded by the TDG. 22 staff members have completed the PGDipHE thus far. 3 academic staff registered for the Diploma in 2016, and another 3 enrolled in 2017.

The **Northwest University (NWU)** offers a PGDipHE:AD and 4 staff members are currently enrolled while 6 staff members are planning to enroll. One person is registering for a PGDipHE in 2017 with Unisa.

At **University of Pretoria (UP)** the PGDipHE has been offered for more than 30 years and has gone through a number of iterations of name change - initially a Diploma in Tertiary Instruction (DTI), then Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education (PGDHE), then Post-graduate Certificate in Higher Education (PGCHE) and as from next year (2018) back to the Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education (PGDipHE).

A number of academic staff annually attend Post-graduate courses in Higher Education. Other academics who enrol are from nearby institutions, such as Unisa and Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). Quite a number of lecturers from TVET colleges and private entities such as corporates, private HEIs and the military, also attend. The average total number of enrolments on an annual basis is 35. Enrolment figures of UP staff (only) over the past 5 years are: 2016 - 6, 2015 - 2, 2014 - 6, 2013 - 5, 2012 - 3

It is encouraging that some academic staff continue with Post-graduate studies in Higher Education after completing the PGCHE. One did her PhD, and another her MEd. Currently another one is enrolled for an MEd and two for BEd (Hons).

The PGDipHE at **Rhodes University (RU)** is nationally recognised - evident through requests to be offered nationally with short courses based on modules also offered nationally. There is a good take-up of modules (and whole qualifications) within the university.

RU had its first PGDipHE graduates in 2004, and since then 93 RU staff have graduated with the PGDipHE, and 74 academics from other institutions - making a total of 167 up to 2017. Since 2011 RU has also been offering a PGDIPHE:AD with a specific focus on the role of academic developers. Of the total of 157, 33 participants have completed the qualification focused on academic developers - one from RU and 32 from elsewhere. It had its first cohort of internal lecturers in 2006, after which the next national intake was in 2010. Since then there has been a national intake annually.

In the period covering the QEP, and in line with the project, the PGDipHE is being offered part-time over two years. The PGDipHE registrations for 2016 are as follows: first year - 18;



second year - 17. PGDipHE (RU) 1st year - 7; PGDipHE (RU) 2nd year - 6. The PGDipHE:AD first year - 13; PGDipHE:AD second year - 22, thus, a total of 93. In 2017 registrations were as follows: PGDipHE national - 0; PGDipHE national second year - 18; PGDipHE (RU) 1st year - 4; PGDipHE (RU) 2nd year - 10; PGDipHE:AD 1st year - 15; PGDipHE:AD 2nd year - 13, thus, a total of 60.

Walter Sisulu University (WSU) does not offer a PGDipHE as yet as part of the professional development of academic staff, however, its academic staff have registered at various institutions to obtain this qualification, such as, RU, UCT and CUT. 2 staff members were enrolled in 2016 and will complete in 2017. 5 staff members have registered in 2017. Initially the Centre for Learning and Teaching Development (CLTD) used to offer the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) through RU, and many newly-appointed staff members who were not in possession of a teaching qualification were recommended for the training. 10 confirmed having received certificates of attendance. As the PGDipHE gains popularity among academics, numbers are expected to increase.

Vaal University of Technology (VUT) offers a PGDipHE as part of staff development at the institution. The number of graduates between 2013 and 2017 are: 2013 – 24; 2014 -19; 2015 – 21; 2016 – 20; 2017 - 22

University of Zululand (UniZul) provides the PGDipHE for academic staff. 10 staff members enrolled in 2016 and 18 in 2017. No participants have yet completed the qualification as this is still a fairly new initiative.

4.3.1.2 Post-Graduate Diploma in Education (in the field of Higher Education) (PGDipE:HE)

The Post-Graduate Diploma in Education in the field of Higher Education at the **University of the Witwatersrand (Wits)** was introduced in 2015, with the aim of enhancing the success of under- and post-graduate students through a formal professional development qualification at honours level. It is offered as a two-year, part-time qualification with four modules. In 2015, the programme had its first intake of 15 students, all of whom were Wits staff members. 13 students successfully completed the qualification from the first cohort with 10 completing with distinction when graduating in November 2016. Seven staff members graduated in 2017.

4.3.1.3 Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education and Training (PGDHET)

University of Fort Hare (UFH) has offered a PGDipHET since 2004. This qualification is designed specifically to enhance the teaching skills and awareness of university lecturers and consists of a number of modules covering the various aspects of current teaching in Higher Education. The PGDHET is a two year, part-time programme.

35 staff members registered for the PGDHET in 2014. 12 staff members will graduate in 2017. An additional 6 may graduate based on RPL and credit transfer considerations. 7 staff members registered for the Diplomain 2017.

The overwhelming majority of awardees of the Vice-Chancellor's Awards for Excellence in Teaching have been PGDHET graduates. The PGDHET has also been awarded a joint certificate of commendation in the National Annual Teaching Excellence Awards from the CHE, and the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of South Africa (HELTASA) in 2013.

The availability of the PGDHET's constituent modules has provided an opportunity for UFH to introduce a new element to its promotion policy for academic staff, namely that academic staff applying for promotion must have successfully completed the module on Assessment



and Moderation of Student Learning. This has been a positive experience for many, leading to the increase in registrations for the full qualification, as well as an acknowledgement of the complexities of university-level teaching and the skills required.

There is also the possibility for academics to register for single modules separately using the short course option. The short course option caters for those staff members pursuing higher Post-graduate degrees such as Masters and Doctorates, who cannot register for two qualifications concurrently. In 2015, 63 staff members were registered for one or two modules out of a total of 9 modules on offer. The number in 2016 was 66.

Walter Sisulu University (WSU) have applied to offer a PGDHET and are awaiting CHE approval. In the interim, academics who register for a PGDHET offered by another institution are supported financially to cover tuition, accommodation and transport costs. The university's promotion policy includes the attainment of a PGDHET as a condition for appointment to lecturer level, and subsequently the levels above.

4.3.1.4 Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education: Teaching and Learning (PGDipHE:T&L)

The PGDipHE:T&L programme is offered collaboratively by three universities in the Western Cape region, namely, the **University of Stellenbosch (US)**, **University of the Western Cape (UWC)**, and the **Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)**. The qualification was first offered in 2014.

The PGDipHE:T&L is offered to staff wishing to further their studies in the area of Higher Education teaching and learning and it aims to: strengthen the candidates teaching and assessment practice; introduce them to different ways of understanding teaching, learning and assessment in Higher Education; assist them to undertake research to enhance teaching, learning and assessment in their institutions; and provide opportunities for national and regional teaching, learning and research collaboration.

The PGDipHE:T&L is a formal honours level (NQF level 8) qualification. All modules are 30 credits each and offered part-time over two years. The programme comprises three core modules and a number of electives that are intended to address a range of specialised issues in teaching and learning in Higher Education. The qualification is offered through a combination of 'block' contact sessions and on-line environments.

Though the regional platform is provided by the Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC) (a body that coordinates the work of the four Western Cape-based universities in South Africa), Stellenbosch University in collaboration with the other regional universities offers a programme of short courses (see below) which is open to all university staff members. These short courses are certified by CHEC and often become the pathway into the Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education in Teaching and Learning.

Ten CPUT participants graduated from the in 2014-2015 cohort and there are 9 CPUT participants in the 2016-17 group. Prior to this, CPUT offered a CPUT-only course, the Higher Diploma in Higher Education and Training (HDHET), from about 2005 till 2013 with approximately 30 graduates.

Sixteen SUN participants graduated at the end of 2015. This is excluding those who graduated from CPUT and UWC. There were 36 candidates in total for the region. The second cohort is currently enrolled for the period 2016-2017 and there are 25 students in total for the region, with 9 candidates from Stellenbosch University.

The three Western Cape universities and seven other institutions have also been part of the national initiative, funded by the DHET National Collaboration TDG, to develop open



source materials and resources for institutions wishing to implement / adapt existing qualifications and make use of / adapt the resources.

University of Johannesburg (UJ) also offers a PGDipHE:T&L and is currently offering 2 modules, principally, but not exclusively for UJ staff.

At **University of the Free State (UFS)** the School for Higher Education Studies (SHES) offers a PGDipHE:T&L.

4.3.2 PGDip, Master's, PhD in Higher Education Studies and Educational Technology

University of Cape Town (UCT) has formal academic qualifications (PGDip; Masters; PhD) in Higher Education Studies and Educational Technology programmes. These are not a requirement for appointment or promotion, however, offer a space for (often young/profession-based) academics who do not have an advanced degree in their discipline and are interested in doing educational research to reach this advanced qualification level; or they offer academics with advanced disciplinary research degrees to deepen professional or reflective practice through a qualification in Higher Education studies.

University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN) offers a PGDip, Master's and Doctorate in Higher Education. These qualifications are not only taken up by UKZN staff members but also academics from other universities. In 2016, 4 UKZN academic staff and 30 external candidates registered for the PGDip. For 2017, the figures are 1 UKZN member and 16 external candidates. The university also offers the Masters in Higher Education (MEd), and in 2016 enrolments were 1 UKZN staff member and 9 external candidates. In 2017, enrolment stands at 8 external candidates. The university also offers a PhD in Higher Education with enrolment of 1 UKZN member in 2016 and 8 external candidates in 2017.

At **North-West University (NWU)**, the Faculty of Education has opted to establish a MPhil in Higher Education, aimed specifically at academics. There are no participants or graduates as yet. Preliminary analysis by Academic Support during 2014 alluded to very little support coming from academics regarding a qualification in HE. Their preference at the time was for workshop-type staff development. A very small percentage preferred a PGDip and hardly anyone opted for a Masters/PhD in HE. Subject specialisation was prioritised.

Walter Sisulu University (WSU) academic staff who were funded to study PGDHET, are now also funded for their Masters in Higher Education studies. There are 9 staff members who currently fall into this category. If Academics take study leave to complete their Masters and Doctoral degrees (in specific subject disciplines or in Higher Education studies), the institution pays for the replacement costs and any other costs as prescribed by WSU policies. Academics who register for discipline-based qualifications are also supported financially.

University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) offers a Masters in Education (MEd) and a PhD in Education. The Masters degree primarily develops advanced and specialised academic and professional studies in an aspect of education with emphasis on research. The M.Ed provides opportunities for professional renewal, career development and research in various fields. The MEd is taken by school principals, teacher educators, assessors, skills development facilitators and workplace trainers, curriculum designers, learning support specialists/developers and university lecturers.



4.3.2.1 New Academic Practitioners' Programme (NAPP)

The **University of Cape Town (UCT)** offers a New Academic Practitioners' Programme (NAPP) on a semester-long basis (twice a year) for academics either new to the academy, or new to UCT, or new in the sense of wanting to move from a disciplinary base to an applied (educational practice) base. This programme has gained a lot of credence at UCT. There is always a waiting list of people for the semester-long engagement, as the cohort is limited to 20 per semester, thus 40 participants per year. It has become 'compulsory' for new academics in the sense that they are invited in their letters of appointment to enrol on the NAPP. Deans and HoDs are also very supportive and some insistent that new academics come on the NAPP. The word 'compulsory' is used in inverted commas in that UCT has not yet tested the waters around resistance, e.g. a new academic is not sure yet that if they said "no" to the programme, whether they would then not be appointed. Those who have been on NAPP are also being drawn into other initiatives, such as TSCOT (see below). Participants receive a certificate of programme attendance on satisfactory completion and a small teaching grant. They get invited to a function with the Vice-Chancellor at which their work is showcased. Deans are asked to introduce these new academics to the participants at the function.

4.3.2.2 Vocational Teacher Education Programme

Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) does not offer a PGDip, however, from 2015 to date, TUT has been engaged in a collaborative initiative with Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences in Finland, to provide training to TUT lecturers to enhance their teaching and facilitation skills. The programme is called 'Haaga-Helia Vocational Teacher Education with a Finnish Touch', and is a one-year programme offered by Haaga-Helia University staff. The vocational teacher education programme is meant for teachers and teacher applicants who plan to work at universities of applied sciences or at vocational institutions/colleges. The programme comprises 60 credits. The programme can be completed flexibly.

The first cohort of 32 TUT staff completed the programme and graduated in February 2017. A group of 20 staff members enrolled in late 2016, and should complete by the end of 2017. The intention is to enrol another 12 participants in 2017, and to continue this into the foreseeable future.

4.4 Non-Formal Qualifications

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Certificate (SoTLC)

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) is in the process of developing a PGDip qualification. It currently offers a non-formal Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Certificate (SoTLC). Ten different modules are offered with some staff only doing some of the modules, with fewer completing the whole certificate. Module attendance in 2016 totalled 168.

The next iteration of SoTLC is a programme that is in its planning stage, and will be offered by the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Media (CTLM) to enable academics to engage in research in the teaching and learning focus areas offered by the Centre, with the aim of developing participants as scholars of teaching and learning within their own disciplines.



NMMU is also planning to introduce a Post-Graduate Diploma in Higher Education Practices in 2019, which will enable academics who are interested in pursuing a formalise qualification in Higher Education to enhance the quality of their teaching to do so.

4.5 Short Courses

Internationally and in South Africa, emphasis is increasingly being placed on the professional development of academics focusing on teaching, curriculum design and assessment. The changing profile of student populations, changes in the modern communications technologies, the increased administrative pressures, as well as, the greater spotlight on student success and relevance, provide impetus for the trend towards supporting the professional development of academics. While many universities are offering or encouraging staff to register for PGDip's or Degrees in Higher Education, a number are supporting their staff by offering short courses.

CHEC Short Courses

The **Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC)** short courses provide a unique opportunity for academics from the Higher Education institutions in the Western Cape to learn, discuss and benefit from the valuable experiences of peers and expert facilitators from the four institutions in the region. All participants receive a certificate from the four partnering institutions (UCT, UWC, SUN and CPU) on successful completion of each course. At this stage, the courses are not formally accredited. The cost varies per short course (this will be paid centrally by the participant's university). Academic staff may enrol for just one, or any number of the courses which include the following:

- Teaching and Learning in Higher Education – aimed at academics who have little or no background in teaching in Higher Education and who would like to learn more about planning, facilitating and evaluating teaching and learning in Higher Education. The course consists of 3 sessions intended to develop practical teaching skills and promote reflection on practice;
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Higher Education – this course is aimed at academics and administrators and consists of 4 workshops and mentoring support (online and face-to face) intended to equip participants with the knowledge, skills and reflexive capabilities to engage with the current RPL policies and practices at their respective institutions;
- Multi-modal Pedagogies and Post-Qualitative Scholarship in Higher Education Teaching and Learning – this blended learning, five-week course builds on three other courses (Designing Learning with Technologies; Research on Teaching and Learning; and Preparing for Proposal and Writing for Publication in Educational Research) and takes participants through the process of thinking about multimodality and post-quantitative research methods;
- Assessment in Higher Education – this course introduces new and experienced university lecturers to the design and implementation of an assessment system in Higher Education and is aimed at professionalising their assessment practices;
- Study on Pedagogical Competence of Engineers – this course aimed at engineering educators focused on the development of teaching portfolios for purposes of tenure, promotion or teaching awards.

The Short Course on Teaching (TSCOT)

University of Cape Town (UCT) offers the Short Course on Teaching (TSCOT) which is aimed at established academics wishing to deepen their practices. It is a semester-long



engagement, in this case weekly contact sessions and classroom observation at least once during the semester. Only a certificate of attendance is issued at the end.

Research Methods Short Learning Course

Vaal University of Technology (VUT) offers a Research Methods' Short Learning Course, which is a 6 month programme. In 2017, 45 academics enrolled for the course.

University Education Induction Progression (UEIP)

University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) offers the University Education Induction Progression (UEIP) short course with a certificate of attendance as part of its staff development programme. Four modules are offered:

1. Assessing Learning in Higher Education
2. Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
3. Supervising Research in Higher Education
4. Designing and Evaluating Curricula

Staff Development programme figures for 2016 were 730 with a target of 640 for 2017. Between 2012 and 2016 there were 2 583 attendees at its programmes.

Multi-lingual developmental programmes

A few universities offer to improve the multi-lingual capacities of their staff, on the basis that this will improve their teaching through enabling better communicative understanding, flexibility and effectiveness in the classroom. Universities such as the **University of Limpopo (UL)** have been focusing on multi-lingualism within the university. The **University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)** is offering multi-lingual developmental programmes using TDG funding. However, since these are not compulsory, continuity in terms of attendance is still a challenge and evaluation of the impact of the programme has also been proposed. The implementation of this activity is still mainly focussing on tutorial sessions and online access. The university already requires that all students successfully complete a module in isiZulu as part of their curriculum. There is a plan to go as far as using the vernacular in assessments as well. There was a proposal for a collaborative project funded from the TDG that will investigate university practices in this area with a view to recommending improvements.

4.6 Programmes/Training to meet Criteria for Probation and Promotion

4.6.1 New Generation Professoriate Programme

At **University of Cape Town (UCT)** assessment of teaching excellence is a requirement in all faculties for promotion purposes. In the context of specific additional initiatives, the university has a New Generation Professoriate Programme, and the Centre for Teaching and Learning facilitates a seminar on this programme that focuses on the developing a teaching portfolio as part of the formal promotion process.

4.6.2 Consultancy and Formal Training

Rhodes University (RU) requires all academic staff members to produce evidence that they meet a number of criteria related to teaching and learning in the three-year probation period. This evidence is submitted in the form of a teaching portfolio which is assessed by trained peers in the faculty. The Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching &



Learning provides support in the form of consultancy and formal training to allow staff to demonstrate that they meet these criteria. Staff applying for personal promotion also have to demonstrate that they meet a set of criteria in respect of teaching and learning which become progressively more demanding as they move up the academic hierarchy. In practice, most academics participate in some formal training to allow them to meet the criteria for probation and promotion, however, this training is not compulsory. One spin-off from the system is that faculty peers who assess teaching evidence are exposed to the practice of others. This has resulted in the development of a great deal of knowledge about teaching and learning being built at faculty level.

4.6.3 Teaching and learning interventions

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) has developed a number of teaching and learning interventions to achieve its mission. Although engagement with teaching and learning development opportunities is not compulsory at NMMU, there are various enabling mechanisms in place to encourage academics to participate in teaching development opportunities. These include:

- Recognising and rewarding teaching and learning excellence. These mechanisms have been in place since NMMU's inception, however, the criteria and processes followed are now benchmarked against the HELTASA excellence awards criteria. Greater emphasis is placed on student and peer reviews with criteria aligned to policies and the performance appraisal system adopted by NMMU.
- Performance appraisal. The performance appraisal system, or Framework for the recognition of Excellence (FRE), was piloted in 2015 to appraise and reward excellent performance. and is a "potentially promising development to foster more widespread uptake of teaching and learning development opportunities and to explore criteria and ways of rewarding teaching excellence more consistently". As part of the process the faculties developed benchmarks for teaching, research and engagement and these are included in the rubrics used to evaluate teaching and learning practice in a number of the faculties.
- Funds to engage with teaching development and innovation projects. Applications for funding have steadily increased and have resulted in a number of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) outputs and recipients indicated that the funded projects enhanced their profiles as teachers.
- Blended learning initiatives. The Blended Learning (BL) team supports academics in their use of educational technologies for teaching in the classroom.
- Teaching and Learning orientation and the New Academics Orientation Programme. This is a key enabler to create opportunities for academics to enhance their teaching practice and the facilitation of learning.

4.7 Staff Development: Workshops/ Conferences/ Programmes

Professionals need different kinds of development during their careers. In South Africa, few academics receive training focused on teaching prior to being appointed as lecturers. The ability of some induction programmes (once-off or of short duration), to fulfil this initial training function is very limited hence other forms of training are needed to develop academics as teachers. After an initial induction into the profession, continuous professional development (CPD) is needed. This may include workshops, seminars, symposia and conferences. These activities may be once-off, part of a series or recurrent (DHET, 2013). Many universities arrange / facilitate workshops and various programmes throughout the year to enhance academics as teachers.



University of Cape Town's (UCT's) Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CILT) hosts an annual conference, the Open Education Global Conference, to provide opportunities for experts in the field to explore the impact of open education on global education and share ideas and practices, as well as discuss issues important to the future of education worldwide.

Central University of Technology (CUT) plans a programme of training and development annually focussing on various aspects of teaching and learning, curriculum, the Higher Education context, educational technologies, work-integrated learning and research in Higher Education. CUT also hosts a number of annual conferences:

(i) Annual conference on Innovation in Teaching and Learning. In 2017 the 4th conference theme will be "Re-examining Teaching and Learning in the Context of Universities of Technology".

(ii) Annual International Conference on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) in Higher Education. In 2017 the theme of the 3rd conference, will be "Pushing boundaries of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) in the changing Higher Education contexts." The Conference provides an opportunity for academics and researchers to engage in SoTL in order to reflect on their teaching practice, seek evidence of their own effectiveness and find opportunities to make their findings public and receive feedback from other academics and researchers.

Durban University of Technology (DUT) has a Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Unit that offers a series of Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LTA) workshops aimed at engaging staff in conversations around their classroom learning, teaching and assessment practices with a view to enhancing and/or transforming these practices. There are two kinds of workshops held: The shorter 2 hour workshops on a relevant LTA topic and a series of workshops made up of two hour sessions that are aimed at responding to the specific needs of lecturers in a particular faculty or department. The Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) also hosts Staff Seminars on topics related to SoTL in post-secondary education.

The University of Fort Hare's (UFH's) Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) initiated a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) agenda for academics involved with teaching and learning to realise the UFH mission and vision.

Staff development workshops cover a range of teaching and learning issues, which include amongst others: Curriculum Development; Assessment; Recognition of Prior Learning; Active Learning; Evaluation of Teaching and Courses; facilitation; Technology Enhanced Learning; and SoTL. Some of these workshops are scheduled by the TLC, whereas others are offered upon request by faculties and departments. The capacity-building of TLC staff on curriculum development will enable them to efficiently support academic departments as they develop new programmes and reviewed -curricula.

The Teaching and Learning Development Programme is aimed to 'Grow your own timber' and seeks to develop a new cadre of academics who are equipped to be good teachers and who engage in scholarly teaching and contribute to SoTL. The TLC also arranges teaching and learning conferences, however, not on a regular basis.

University of the Free State's (UFS's) Centre for Teaching and Learning offers the following workshop/ seminars in four broad streams:

1. Design your Course
2. Teach your Course
3. Assess your Course



4. Grow your Career. This stream assists staff to build their teaching portfolio, apply for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards, and find a balance between teaching and research.

University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) hosts an Annual Higher Education Conference which is an international gathering of academics and researchers who seek to showcase innovations, generate debate, theorise policy and practice, and explore opportunities and challenges in Higher Education. The Conference also serves as a platform for disseminating Higher Education and institutional research findings. The 2017 the 11th Conference has the theme “Higher Education Today: Crises, Contestations, Contemplations, and Futures” aims to interrogate the artificial dichotomy between teaching and research. In future the conference will focus more on Higher Education and not solely on teaching and learning

Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) provides ongoing workshops, seminars and conferences dedicated to teaching in Higher Education.

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University’s (NMMU) Centre for Teaching, Learning and Media (CTLM) provides workshops and interventions to groups or individuals on request. Examples include :

- Multi-lingual presentations delivered to all faculties as part of CTLM roadshows.
- A short learning programme on assessment
- Blended Learning (BL) workshops. The BL team conducted training for 541 individuals in 2016 and successfully handled 247 technology-related requests.
- Course evaluations and student feedback. Course evaluations and student feedback are not mandatory but are conducted by departments and faculties on request. 15 407 evaluations were scanned in 2016
- The Curriculum Renewal Journey (CRJ). is a series of institutional curriculum renewal workshops which were facilitated from the DVC Teaching & Learning’s office.

A new approach to course design – the Carpe Diem process, was piloted in 2017 and CTLM plans to roll out this process to all faculties next year. The process is a collaborative team-based course design process utilizing Carpe Diem principles (Salmon, 2013).

University of Pretoria (UP) has an academic staff development policy that requires lecturers to complete digital literacy courses, including LMS courses, assessment training and the academic induction during probation. The implementation is, however, not monitored. The Department for Education Innovation offers priority (free to academics) training on the LMS, assessment, and various other online courses. For senior appointments, applicants have to submit both a research and a teaching portfolio for promotion.

Stellenbosch University (SUN) has a number of initiatives to promote quality teaching and provides a range of professional learning opportunities for lecturers with regard to their teaching role. These initiatives range from a Professional Educational Development programme for academics newly appointed at the university, to an annual in-house Teaching and Learning conference and a range of seminars and workshops, as well as, schemes such as Teaching Fellowships and grants for small-scale classroom-based research and innovation. Lecturers participate voluntarily in these professional learning opportunities which are not accredited, however, they provide spaces for the ongoing development of academics as teachers. In 2017 the institution will make ten awards for teaching excellence available and introduce the teaching portfolio as the vehicle by which teaching excellence will be judged.



Annually the institution organises a conference on innovation(s) in teaching and learning and an international conference on SoTL. The SoTL Conference in 2017 aims to address all aspects of teaching and learning at SU and provide a platform where academics can: share best practices, research findings and innovative ideas about teaching and learning; reflect on and debate about teaching and learning methods, trends and goals within the current context; and celebrate teaching and learning.

University of Venda (UNIVEN) offers staff development programmes such as, short courses on assessment and moderation, teaching and learning and curriculum development and academics are encouraged to attend conferences on teaching and learning. The University has not yet included a PGDIP as a requirement for appointment or promotion.

Walter Sisulu University (WSU) expects all new academic staff to attend the Senate-approved Professional Excellence Programme (PEP) that focuses on issues concerning teaching and learning in Higher Education, assessment and curriculum development.

WSU utilises external service providers to conduct workshops on SETA-accredited Unit Standards. The Centre for Learning and Teaching Development (CLTD) promotes Communities of Practice (CoP) and the SoTL, wherein academics are encouraged to research their practice, conduct seminars and colloquia and present at national and international conferences.

4.8 Induction Programmes

South African post-graduate students and early career academics are not generally expected to undertake pedagogical training even though, in many cases, they are involved in some form of teaching or tutoring. As a result, university induction programmes have become the main vehicle for initial training to develop aspiring academics as a university teachers. Induction programmes may include workshops, seminars, symposia and conferences and may be once-off, part of a series or recurrent (DHET, 2013).

Some universities have progressed to offer more structured and comprehensive induction programmes that are compulsory for all newly-employed academics. Examples include:

At **Durban University of Technology (DUT)**, the Academic Induction Programme provides professional development opportunities for newly-appointed academic staff which forms part of a suite of Induction Programmes. The programme introduces new staff to learning, teaching and assessment policies, approaches and practices at DUT and in Higher Education. The programme is underpinned by a transformative intention that promotes critical reflexivity and participants researching their own practice.

At **University of Fort Hare (UFH)** academic staff induction takes place at the beginning of every semester and is supportive of the professionalisation of academics as teachers.

At **University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)** the induction programmes accommodated as many academics as possible by being spread over a full year or even two years for the deadline for completion of the programme.

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) provides the Introduction to Teaching and Learning orientation programme which is a 3-day workshop offered to beginning academics.. It is offered twice a year – in January and July. In 2016, there were 46 participants Already 50 participants have indicated interest for 2017.

University of Pretoria (UP) has an academic staff development policy that requires the academic induction of lecturers during probation.



Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) provides staff members with a continuous professional development orientation programme (short course) called “Licence to Teach” tailored for newly- appointed lecturing staff. The course consists of one week of contact and six months of supported learning in which the participants work on assignments and other programme - related activities. In terms of TUT guidelines, a newly-appointed ‘permanent’ lecturer may only be confirmed as a permanent lecturer after he/she has successfully completed this Programme.

Enrolment statistics for the programme for the last three years are as follows:

2015: 50 permanent lecturers and 66 part-time lecturers

2016: 55 permanent lecturers and 109 part-time lecturers

2017: 25 permanent lecturers and 39 part-time lecturers

Walter Sisulu University (WSU) expects all newly appointed academics to attend the Senate-approved Professional Excellence Programme (PEP) (see above).

4.9 Mentor/Mentee Projects

Central University of Technology (CUT) initiated mentor / mentee and SoTL projects in 2014 funded by the TDG wherein seasoned academics mentor novice academics on scholarly teaching. As part of these projects, seminars, colloquia and workshops were organised and national and international experts in teaching and learning were invited to make presentations. Several Communities of Practice (CoP) groups also focused on different aspects of teaching and learning. Academics are not only encouraged to reflect on their teaching and improve it, they are also expected to write papers on their teaching and learning, present these at teaching and learning conferences institutionally, nationally and internationally, and further publish them in peer-reviewed journals. Institutional policy for promotion of academic staff takes into account teaching together with research and community engagement.

Durban University of Technology (DUT) promotes mentoring of new lecturers and all newly-appointed academic staff are advised to find a suitable mentor. Heads of Departments are requested to assist staff, especially those new to teaching in Higher Education, to find a suitable mentor. CELT provides training for mentors and mentees (for new staff) and provides support during the mentoring relationships. This support may be via the online induction classroom or through workshops. New staff are encouraged to be mentored for at least six months.

4.10 Portfolios for promotion/university teachers seeking to advance their professional careers

A number of universities are beginning to consider evidence of teaching development and SoTL for appointment and promotion or for academics seeking to advance their professional careers. Many institutions now require evidence-based portfolios in which academics articulate their understanding of, and approach to teaching and learning. This has also provided a wealth of resources that may be integrated into teaching and learning conversations (CHE, 2016: 168)

Teaching portfolios have thus become an important vehicle for academics to showcase their experience / involvement / prowess / assessment of teaching practice.



4.10.1 Portfolios for Promotion

University of Johannesburg (UJ) The most important initiative with regard to developing and acknowledging teaching is the UJ Points system for promotion, which allows candidates to place emphasis either on research or teaching. All applicants are required to compile a teaching portfolio for promotion. Also, in terms of annual performance management, academic staff are required to provide evidence of involvement in teaching development and SoTL, and the impact this is having on their classroom activities.

University of Stellenbosch (SUN) considers teaching portfolios as being relevant in Higher Education. Since teaching and learning is core business it is important for US academics to track their professional learning in this area, as well as their research and innovation of classroom practice, Post-graduate student performances and to develop their teaching philosophy over time. One-on-one consultations, workshops and SoTL presentations are available to academics wishing to create their teaching portfolios.

4.10.2 ePortfolios

The Cape Higher Education Consortium (CHEC) initiated a study on teaching portfolios: “I am trying to practice good teaching”: Reconceptualising eportfolios for professional development in vocational Higher Education (Winberg and Pallit, 2016) since teaching portfolios have become increasingly important to university teachers. The research is based on a teaching portfolio development course for university teachers in the Western Cape region of South Africa offered by CHEC between March and April 2015.

Approximately 40 academic staff members attended the short course, 18 of whom completed eportfolios, while an additional 13 participants submitted work-in-progress toward an eportfolio. Concluding reflections point to participants experiencing portfolios as “a risk” to tenure or promotion since both inexperienced and experienced teachers asking for feedback on practice or sharing a portfolio-in-progress might find this difficult (see, for example Van Note Chism, 2007:3,4). The research found that whilst there are many obvious benefits to reflexivity, including transformed practices and better learning for students, choosing to reveal a reflective teaching identity may place university teachers who are seeking promotion in difficult and vulnerable positions.

4.11 Teaching and Learning Excellence Awards

Teaching excellence awards have been in existence in universities since 1957 when they were first introduced at the University of California. By 2002 teaching award schemes were implemented in research-led HEIs, two-year colleges and liberal arts colleges in the United States and in universities in Hong Kong and Canada (See Layton and Brown, 2011: 163-174).

After almost six decades, teaching excellence awards have become part of a long-standing tradition in the Higher Education environment in South Africa. In 2012, the CHE commissioned a national study on teaching excellence awards in South Africa. This study highlights some of the key similarities and significant differences in teaching excellence awards. Examples of aspects of the schemes are provided, for those institutions who might wish to benchmark their schemes or to adapt them, and also, to serve as a stimulus for further debate. Special attention is given to the criteria used in various schemes. The study discusses the perceived values of awards as reflected in the selected literature (Leibowitz, *et al*, 2012).

The stated purpose of various teaching awards appears to be celebratory, motivational or reactive (in response to the stature of research). Whilst some awards schemes maintain



their purpose is to “celebrate and reward excellence in teaching” (Halse et al, 2007: 730), the unofficial reason attributed to the Australian and British schemes is to “counter the privileged position of research by improving the importance and status of teaching in universities” (Halse et al, 2007:731).

In South Africa the National Excellence in Teaching Awards have offered recognition of excellence in teaching and learning through a partnership between CHE and The Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa (HELTASA). In 2017 these awards will be supported by a grant from the DHET.

Universities are invited to nominate up to three individuals or teaching teams for these national awards. The awards provide an opportunity to value the reflective, critical and contextually aware teaching that happens across the diverse Higher Education sector. The importance and significance of these awards is heightened given recent events and the renewed imperative for transformation in Higher Education in South Africa. A maximum of five awards will be made in 2017. Academics (lecturers and academic development practitioners) at all South African public Higher Education institutions are eligible for this award.

The aims of the awards are to:

- show support at a national level for excellence in teaching and learning in higher education;
- generate a cadre of academics who are identifiable and able to provide inspiration and leadership in teaching in their disciplines, institutions and regions; and
- generate debate and public awareness about what constitutes teaching excellence in Higher Education.

A number of South African universities have developed and present awards for teaching excellence for their academic staff and some universities refer to these as the Vice-Chancellor’s Awards. Academics from all universities are also eligible to apply for the CHE / Heltasa National Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards.

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) recognises and rewards teaching and learning excellence and the criteria and processes followed are benchmarked at a national level against the HELTASA excellence awards criteria. Greater emphasis is placed on student and peer reviews with criteria aligned to other policies and the performance appraisal system adopted by NMMU.

Stellenbosch University (SUN) will make available ten awards in 2017 for teaching excellence and introduce the teaching portfolio as the vehicle by which teaching excellence will be judged. Academics are also encouraged to participate in the Vice Chancellor’s teaching and Learning Excellence Awards.

Walter Sisulu University’s (WSU) policy on Vice-chancellor’s Teaching Excellence Awards fully integrates the institutional criteria on teaching competences.



5. Conclusion

The authors of this research report observed that several initiatives have started to have an impact on universities evidenced by institutions encouraging academics to focus on improving their teaching. In addition, some institutions have considered mechanisms to put in place to establish parity of esteem for university teaching and research.

Feedback from respondents indicated that the drive to improve the quality of education had met with widespread support in various ways and degrees. Some institutions had enthusiastically embraced many initiatives whereas others had approached the various issues and aspects cautiously. Many institutions have seized the opportunity to improve teaching with academic staff enrolling for formal courses leading to a qualification and/or taking short courses in the desired areas of development. These courses are either funded by the TDG or by institutions. Most institutions offer induction courses for new academic staff whilst others conduct professional development courses on a regular basis for new, as well as existing academic staff. Regardless of the nature of the support, it would seem that most institutions have begun to encourage/assist/compell/reward the improvement of teaching and the professional development of academics as teachers. These developments also serve to contribute to the bigger aim of increasing access to Higher Education; improving university education to lower the drop-out rate, reducing the failure rate, increasing graduation rates and shortening the time students take to complete a degree.

Some institutions have been engaged in staff development initiatives focusing on teaching for some time, whilst others have just started or plan to start. A few institutions are collaborating on a regional basis or based on proximity to each other or availability of courses whereas some institutions are constrained by resources (funding, staff, mentors, time, attitudes) and location.

While certain universities are fully supportive of focusing on the development of teaching other institutions are cautious about adopting new initiatives which might affect enthusiasm for what is already working well in their institutions. Attitudes towards teaching development vary more widely in research-intensive institutions. The respondents from some of these universities articulated that focusing on teaching development might affect those staff members who wish to pursue Post-graduate degrees. Thus, the debate around the importance and status of teaching and learning versus research is evident in a number of these universities.

In the experts' opinion, a study of and discussion with people from the European institutions / organizations, which have successfully implemented professional development initiatives focused on teaching, would provide an opportunity for South Africans to explore possible solutions to some of these unclear and problematical issues. For example, the effect of accreditation and / or fellowships in these countries and institutions might help to clarify what may be adaptable in the South African Higher Education context.

The local expert noted that some universities pointed out the huge challenge of credibility concerning teaching. An issue, which many universities had raised, is the lack of 'respect' for qualifications/studies/short courses on teaching and learning. Until academics see accreditation of teaching and/or obtaining a Higher Education teaching qualification as 'respectable' and of equal value to obtaining a disciplinary or professional qualification, they are more likely to remain incredulous. Some Vice-Chancellors were interested in pursuing a formal accreditation route for academics as teachers, however, the matter had not yet gained enough traction. A few universities have argued for some years for a system similar to the UK fellowships programme where lecturers and other academic support staff could be evaluated against a national framework and acknowledged as a rated teacher in the



same way that researchers are rated by the NRF. However, many academics prize their disciplinary knowledge and expertise and are suspicious of, or not interested in, pursuing teaching development. The local expert further noted that ensuring that further studies/pursuits focused on teaching are rewarded monetarily or with promotion might change this thinking. In many universities, there is increasing attention being paid to teaching in the formal annual academic review processes and in the processes of *ad hominem* promotion. In many faculties, the evaluation of the staff on their teaching or contributions to teaching (e.g. curriculum development work; improvement of assessment practices; development of policy) is a requirement and the ‘value’ of the teaching contribution gains credence as a result and is seen at least as important as research in the formal evaluation of academics. A few institutions have an academic teacher-only track, which allows academics, who have chosen this route, to be formally evaluated on their teaching, and allows for *ad hominum* promotion up to the rank of Senior Lecturer.

The authors share the hope that these initiatives will begin to develop a cohort of academic staff who will, whilst improving themselves as academic teachers, the quality of their teaching and learning, and in their engagement with students, begin to address the situation in South African Higher Education which many consider currently to be daunting, undesirable, and in many cases unacceptable. The National Development Plan’s description of the South African Higher Education system as a “low participation, high attrition” system, needs to be addressed. Statistics produced by the DHET and CHE that show that less than half of the students who enter HEIs complete their programmes after six years. Considering that the participation rate of 20-24 year-olds is less than 20%, the low completion rate is of great concern (CHE, 2014: 6). Universities are also concerned about this situation, therefore it is heartening to see the enthusiasm and support to begin to address these challenges.

European institutions universally accepted that Higher Education and its links with research and innovation played a crucial role in individual and societal development and in providing the highly-skilled human capital and the articulate citizens that Europe needed to create jobs, economic growth, and prosperity. Higher Education institutions were regarded as crucial partners in delivering the European Union’s strategy to drive forward and maintain growth. This is just as much a challenge for South Africa and its Higher Education sector today, and the response from universities to the QEP and the other initiatives of the and CHE is evidence of the realisation that some changes are urgently needed.



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