



WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY
SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMME
POLICY

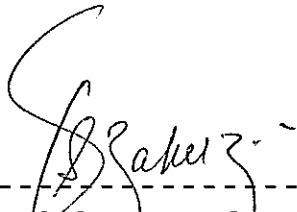
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SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMME POLICY

Sponsor Division	Academic Affairs and Research Division
Responsible Department	Directorate for Short Learning Programmes
Related WSU Policies	
Policy Name	Policy Name
WSU Curriculum Policy	WSU Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
WSU Teaching & Learning Strategy	WSU Assessment Procedure Manual
WSU Assessment Policy	WSU Quality Assurance and Management Policy
Related Legislation	
Human Resources Development Strategy for South Africa 2010-2030	Higher Education Act 101 of 1997
Ministry of Education: National Plan for Higher Education in South Africa: February 2001	Minimum Admission Requirements: Government Gazette, No. 27961, August 2005
CHE: A Good Practice Guide for the Quality Management of Short Courses offered outside of the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (September 2016)	National Development Plan 2030

National Skills Development Strategy III	Minimum Admission Requirements: Government Gazette, No. 27961, August 2005
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CHE	Council on Higher Education
CIB	Centre, Institute, Bureau
DVC: AAR	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PQM	Professional Qualifications Mix
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SSLPC	Senate Short Learning Programme Committee
SLP	Short Learning Programmes
SSLPC	Senate Short Learning Programme Committee
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
WSU	Walter Sisulu University
WSUDSLP	Walter Sisulu University Directorate for Short Learning Programmes

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 By and large, the post-1994 policies on higher education, economic development, innovation, and technology in South Africa advocate a paradigm shift in terms of how higher education institutions (HEIs) function. These require that HEIs move from the traditional focus on the dual missions of teaching and research, to embrace a more expanded mandate that includes being active role players towards economic growth and social development.
- 1.2 The paradigm shift alluded to above has seen HEIs becoming increasingly involved in 'third mission' activities, including technology transfer and innovation, community engagement and offering of short courses. The offering of short courses is increasingly becoming a significant thrust among the day-to-day activities of both private and public HEIs in the country, such that some institutions have set up 'subsidiaries' or fully-fledged divisions, to run short courses.
- 1.3 The principle of life-long learning is an integral part of the transformation plan that seeks to address the inequalities of the past through increased capacitating and up-skilling of predominantly unskilled and/or semi-skilled individuals, most of whom are from disadvantaged backgrounds. The offering of short courses is seen as an essential mechanism for contributing towards meeting the objectives of life-long learning and opening up opportunities for previously disadvantaged population groups to become active role players in the economy and society at large.

- 1.4 Further to the above, various national pronouncements and policies promote short courses as a means to: meet specific knowledge and skills needs for the workplace; empower individuals with the ability to adapt to innovation and change; and improve chances of access to higher education programmes for those who do not meet the standard formal requirements. In addition, information about short courses attended can be presented as part of the portfolio of evidence when applying for recognition of prior learning (RPL) for access or advanced standing.
- 1.5 Walter Sisulu University (WSU) acknowledges that it is engaged in offering short courses that do not lead to qualifications or part qualifications on the Higher Education Qualifications Sub- Framework (HEQSF). These courses serve different developmental purposes to the participants. To the institution itself, the offering of such short courses provides an avenue for community or societal engagement and income generation and contribute to the broader transformative agenda of South African higher education.
- 1.6 WSU is, like other HEI's, being called upon to meet the rapidly increasing demand for short courses, and thus must set and define minimum quality requirements for short courses. WSU is therefore committed to putting the necessary quality management mechanisms in place to ensure that the short courses they develop, and offer are of value to the participants, their sponsors, and other relevant stakeholders. In addition to setting minimum quality requirements, WSU also presents the fundamental principles and good practices associated with each minimum requirement; and articulates what needs to be done at an institutional level to ensure that the minimum requirements are met. The principles and practices provide a basis for some degree of standardisation. This approach, in turn, could lead to inter-institutional recognition of each other's short courses when

considering applications for access or advanced standing through the route of RPL. This outcome is a positive development which will serve to reinforce the aspiration towards an integrated higher education system.

1.7 WSU holds a principled position that the primary responsibility for the quality of teaching and learning within short learning programmes, and for the implementation of the necessary quality assurance mechanisms, rests with the higher education provider. It is this approach to quality assurance that has informed the development of this Policy to provide for the quality management of short courses at WSU.

1.8 It is against the above backdrop that this Policy (and its associated *Procedures for Short Learning Programmes at WSU*) is designed. It is a basic but broad framework for regulating the creation and offering of short learning programmes (SLPs) in terms of the promotion of rigour, quality, and excellence at WSU. The division of income derived from the teaching of SLP's is dealt with in a separate set of guidelines.

2. PURPOSE

2.1 This Policy prescribes the broad framework for the development and offering of SLP's at WSU. The specific processes and procedures relating thereto are dealt with in the *Procedures for Short Learning Programmes at WSU*.

2.2 The objectives of the Policy are too broadly:

2.2.1 Describe the institutional structures and arrangements for the development and offering of SLP's at WSU.

2.2.2 Establish the principles upon which SLP's at WSU are founded.

2.2.3 Provide a broad framework for the WSU SLP strategy, processes,

and core concepts as they relate specifically to quality assurance and enhancement.

2.2.4 Provide effective policy control measures which assure efficacy and accountability in the development and offering of SLP's.

2.3 Only Centres, Institutes and Bureaus (CIB) constituted in terms of the *WSU Policy on Centres, Institutes and Bureaus* may offer SLP's.

3. SCOPE

3.1 This Policy applies to short courses that are provided outside the realms of the HEQSF. These courses provide flexible, 'just-in-time' and 'just-enough' learning to meet specific needs such as to improve or up-date participants' knowledge and skills in a particular field; impart new knowledge and competencies; facilitate the adoption of innovation and change, and provide for personal or professional development.

3.2 The Policy covers the entire value chain of the credit and non-credit bearing short courses offered outside the HEQSF at WSU - from the design and development to their delivery, and post-delivery processes. This approach provides a holistic perspective based on the understanding that what happens at any particular segment in the value chain has the potential to influence the quality of the final product.

3.3 Short learning programmes, as a form of non-formal education offered by WSU, are administered, and coordinated by the Walter Sisulu University Directorate for Short Learning Programmes (WSUDSLP) within the Teaching and Learning Portfolio for WSU. The role, responsibilities, and governance of the WSUDSLP are detailed within the *Procedures for Short Learning Programmes at WSU*.

4. KEY DEFINITIONS AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES

KEY DEFINITIONS

4.1 Advanced standing

The status granted to a student for admission to studies at a higher level than the student's prior formal studies would have allowed. A typical example of advanced standing is 'exemption' that a student is granted from modules at a particular level of a programme.

4.2 Benchmarking

A process of comparing programmes or courses in the institution against similar ones in other institutions, to assess their parity in terms of quality, standards, levels, and other specified features.

4.3 Good practices

Approaches, methods, techniques, or ways of doing things that are generally accepted as being correct or more effective in delivering desired results or outcomes in a particular industry or profession.

4.4 Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework

A sub-framework of the National Qualification Framework which is focused on higher education qualifications. It is developed and managed by the Council on Higher Education (CHE) under the aegis of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA).

4.5 Learning Outcomes

Contextually demonstrated results of specific learning processes. They include knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes.

4.6 Life-long Learning

Learning that is flexible, diverse, and available to individuals at different stages of their lives, in different places and within different contexts. It empowers individuals with learning tools, general and work-related knowledge and skills, inter-cultural and multi-cultural competencies, a sense of personal development, and self-actualisation.

4.7 Quality

Embodies meeting the minimum standards of education; fitness for purpose in the context of mission differentiation of institutions within a national framework; value for money; and transformation in the sense of developing the personal capabilities of individuals, as well as advancing the agenda for social change.

4.8 Quality Assurance

Refers to the processes of ensuring that specified standards or minimum requirements of quality in education are met.

4.9 Quality Management

The sum of institutional arrangements for assuring, supporting, developing, and enhancing, as well as monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, research, and community engagement.

4.10 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Refers to the principles and processes through which the prior knowledge and skills of an individual are made visible, mediated, and assessed for alternative access and admission to educational programmes, recognition and certification, or further learning and development.

4.11 Short Courses

SPLs offered by higher education institutions outside their formal structured undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and they,

therefore, do not lead to qualifications on the HEQSF. They serve a range of social and educational purposes, including improving or refreshing participants' knowledge and skills in a particular field, improving participants' readiness for specific formal higher education programmes, continuing professional development, learning to use technology, personal fulfilment, social development and good citizenship, to mention a few. A SLP will display the following characteristics:

- a) SLPs include short or advanced courses/programmes, workshops and seminars that do not form part of the Programme and Qualification Mix (PQM) of WSU but excludes learnerships.
- b) SLPs differ from subsidised, formal academic offerings in that they are often focused on a market or specific issue or skills demand, depend on a quick response and are developed for a particular niche target group.
- c) SLPs may provide an opportunity to test and develop programmes before they are formalised and can serve as an incubator for formal offerings.
- d) SLPs may or may not be credit-bearing. Credit-bearing courses may be linked to a registered qualification and can lead to the award of credits for a part of a qualification. Non- credit-bearing courses may carry points required for the ongoing registration of occupations linked to professional councils.
- e) SLPs are offered on level 5 or higher of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
- f) SLPs may provide students with an access route to formal qualifications.

- g) SLPs are managed differently from formal academic offerings, and approval for their implementation needs to be obtained in a short period.

4.12 Short Course Participants (participants)

Refer to individuals or groups of individuals who register for, and attend short courses to learn and acquire knowledge, skills, competencies and the desired attitudes or behaviour.

4.13 Skills Programme

A skills programme is an occupationally directed programme which is presented by an accredited provider, and when completed, will constitute credit towards an NQF registered qualification.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

4.14 General

4.14.1 Although participation in SLPs is voluntary; employees must be motivated to participate in SLPs without derogating from their other academic duties of formal tuition, research, community engagement and academic citizenship.

4.14.2 In terms of the University's mission, high standards must be maintained in respect of the non-formal products offered by the University. Study material, teaching and assessment must be of the highest quality. Quality assurance procedures must be followed.

4.14.3 All SLPs offered by WSU must be revised regularly to keep them up to date and market related.

4.14.4 The development and teaching of SLPs must be in line with applicable WSU policies such as the Teaching and Learning and Assessment Policies. The initiating Centre, Institute or Bureau (CIB) must conduct an institutional scan to ensure that there is adherence to the relevant rules/policies.

4.14.5 A market scan, or other investigations, must be conducted to determine possible needs that could be addressed by SLPs.

4.14.6 SLPs must not compete with any other formal or existing SLPs in the University. The following criteria for determining overlap must be used:

- SLPs must not overlap with WSU formal programmes/qualifications in content and outcomes by more than 60%.
- SLPs must not overlap with existing WSU SLPs in content and outcomes by more than 30%.
- SLP modules must not overlap with formal or existing WSU SLP modules in content and outcome by more than 60%.

4.14.7 In exceptional cases, the criteria mentioned above may be deviated from. The request must be well substantiated, must be recommended by the WSUDSLP and must be approved by Senate. The following aspects must be addressed when considering competition:

- The target group(s).
- Does the overlap or duplication result in an infringement of copyright or intellectual property rights?

- The extent of the overlap of the constituent components of potentially competing short learning or formal programmes/modules.
 - What is the purpose of the SLP/module?
 - What is the delivery mode?
 - Have opportunities for collaboration within WSU been explored?
- 4.14.8 Approval of the SLP by Senate must be obtained before finalising any contract with third parties outside WSU regarding credit-bearing SLPs, and the approval of faculty management must be obtained in respect of non-credit-bearing workshops and seminars.
- 4.14.9 No contract may be concluded until the Legal Service Department (under the Office of the Registrar) has endorsed the agreement. A Certificate of Due Diligence must be completed and attached to the contracts presented to WSU's Legal Services Department for scrutiny regarding legal compliance.
- 4.14.10 All contracts in respect of SLP tuition must be in accordance with the appropriate WSU policy on contracts.
- 4.14.11 Copies of all contracts, duly signed following WSU policy in this regard, must be submitted by the head of the CIB to the Department of Finance and the Legal Services Department for reference purposes in respect of such contracts.
- 4.14.12 Study material developed for SLPs is the intellectual property of WSU. The copyright vests with and is owned by WSU. Should there be a departure from this provision, the Faculty Executive Committee must first approve it after consultation with WSU's

Legal Services Department, and it must thereafter be submitted to the WSU Institutional Management Committee for consideration.

4.14.13 Articulation with formal learning programmes should be considered when developing a SLP. However, it is recognised that not all SLPs will articulate with formal learning programmes/modules.

5. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMMES

5.1 Senate

Senate is the highest decision-making structure for academic matters. It is responsible for final approval concerning the offering of short learning programmes, as recommended to it by the Senate Short Learning Programme Committee (SSLPC) after application by a CIB.

5.2 Senate Short Learning Programme Committee

5.2.1 Provides Policy and strategic direction on the short learning programme activities at WSU.

5.2.2 Considers, reviews, and makes recommendations to the Senate on the short learning programme activities and staff, participants, programmes, programme access, quality enhancement, participant retention, development, and exit.

5.2.3 Considers, reviews, and makes recommendations to Senate on matters such as the appointment of CIB staff.

5.2.4 Oversees policy formulation on short learning programmes.

5.2.5 The Chairperson of the SSLPC is the Director of the WSUDSLP.

5.3 Walter Sisulu University Directorate for Short Learning Programmes (WSUDSLP)

5.3.1 The WSUDSLP is an integral part of the WSU and operates within the vision, mission, strategic plan, and corporate values of the WSU.

5.3.2 The WSUDSLP is part of the academic structure of the WSU and reports to the DVC: AAR. It operates as a service unit and provides a support structure to CIBs to enhance their capacity to offer SLP's.

5.3.3 As a general principle, the administration of all SLP's will be centralised in the WSUDSLP.

5.3.4 The WSUDSLP may present SLP's via a CIB. Such programmes should avoid conflict with, or unnecessary duplication of existing programmes being offered by the various other CIBs unless a prior agreement has been reached with the appropriate CIB.

5.3.5 The specific functions of the WSUDSLP are detailed in the *Procedures for Short Learning Programmes at WSU* however, in general, it is responsible for:

- i. Evaluating the submission for new SLPs offerings within WSU and to make recommendations to SSLPC regarding approval.
- ii. Overseeing the quality assurance of the registration process in respect of SLPs within WSU.
- iii. Updating and evaluating the Policy on SLPs.

- iv. Updating, evaluating, and making recommendations to the Senate regarding changes to the rules, procedures, submission forms and relevant policies in respect of SLPs.
- v. Updating the submission forms necessary for the approval of a SLP.
- vi. Evaluating whether a SLP is targeted for the right domain, target group and NQF level.
- vii. Evaluating whether a SLP competes with another formal or short learning offering or not.
- viii. Monitoring the relevance of SLPs.
- ix. In collaboration with the Quality Management Directorate, to evaluate adherence to teaching and assessment procedures and the achievement of the specifications of the unit standards for SLPs after they have been taught for a specified period.
- x. Overseeing and monitoring the implementation of the Policy on SLPs.
- xi. Marketing and coordinating all WSU SLPs.
- xii. Assisting all CIBs with SLP requirements.
- xiii. To promote SLPs within WSU.
- xiv. The approval route for non-credit and credit-bearing SLPs is via the CIB structures, the WSUDSLP, the SSLPC and, finally, Senate.
- xv. The approval route for non-credit bearing workshops, and seminars, is via CIB structures, faculty management, WSUDSLP and finally SSLPC.

5.4 Faculty Short Learning Programme Committee

Considers, reviews and makes recommendations to Faculty Boards, after approval from the WSUDSLP, for recommendation to the SSLPC on short learning programme matters such as the offering of new programmes, removal of programmes, the appointment of SLP staff, remuneration of SLP staff, reports from CIBs housed within faculties, quality enhancement and assurance, as well as participant retention, development and exit.

6. POLICY DIRECTIVES FOR SHORT LEARNING PROGRAMMES

The Policy directs:

6.1 Walter Sisulu University Short Learning Programme Policy and Strategy Framework

6.1.1 The WSU Short Learning Programme Policy governs the offering of short learning programmes within the institution. The Policy is accorded the same status as other institutional policies which govern teaching and learning, research, and community engagement.

6.1.2 The Policy is to be referred to as a framework to regulate the development and delivery of short courses to protect WSU's integrity and reputation and to ensure participant/sponsor value for money.

6.1.3 The WSUDSLP is responsible for the governance and coordination of short courses and acts as the custodian for this Policy. The WSUDSLP monitors compliance with the Policy across the institution and recommends corrective measures to the relevant authorities in cases where it finds that the Policy is not being complied with.

6.1.4 The Policy provides a broad framework for the offering of SLP's and is augmented by the *Procedures for Short Learning Programmes at WSU*.

6.1.5 Compliance with the Policy is assessed as per the scope of work of internal auditors.

6.2 Short Learning Programme Coordination and Governance Structures

6.2.1 Proper governance and coordination by the WSUDSLP is to be executed to avoid 'mission drift' and to ensure adequate accountability and oversight of quality management for SLP offerings. The WSUDSLP is accountable to the University via the DVC: AAR.

6.2.2 The cooperation and support of CIBs that develop and deliver short courses with the WSUDSLP, is essential in ensuring the integrity of the processes and activities across the short course value chain at WSU.

6.2.3 Adherence to the maxims of due diligence, transparency, fairness, and risk management, is essential in ensuring sound governance of the offering of short courses at WSU.

6.2.4 The personnel employed in the WSUDSLP are suitably qualified and experienced so that it can provide quality coordination services to short course participants, instructors or facilitators and other interested parties within and outside the WSU.

6.2.5 The staff of the WSUDSLP work closely with the relevant staff members in the faculties and CIBs that are responsible for developing and delivering short courses.

- 6.2.6 The WSUDSLP liaises with staff in student support and advisory services such as the library, accommodation, and ICT, to ensure that short course participants have access to the relevant services where necessary.
- 6.2.7 The WSUDSLP devises standard operating procedures (SOPs) and develops templates. It also enforces adherence to the SOPs and the consistent use of the templates across the institution.
- 6.2.8 The WSUDSLP produces a report on all aspects of short course offering (including financial information) on an annual basis. Such a report is included in the institution's overall yearly report for the sake of transparency.

6.3 Processes and procedures for course design and development

- 6.3.1 Short courses should be designed and developed to meet the needs and expectations of participants, employers, sponsors, and professional associations, where applicable.
- 6.3.2 Short courses should be designed and developed in the context of WSU's vision, mission, goals, core competencies and resources taking cognisance of policies relating to teaching and learning, research and community engagement and the overall academic portfolio strategy.
- 6.3.3 The WSU philosophy of teaching and learning as articulated by Faculties, and curriculum design should inform the design and development of short courses.
- 6.3.4 The course design and development process should result in clear and concise written statements of intended learning outcomes, as well as the possible impacts of the respective courses.

- 6.3.5 The design and development of short courses must be preceded by a needs analysis to ensure that each short course has a clearly defined need to satisfy.
- 6.3.6 The needs analysis is complemented with market analysis to identify the potential target groups for each short course. The size of the potential demand is one of the primary considerations in deciding on whether or not to develop a short course. Similarly, the educational background of the target group influences the choice of the content of a short course, as well as the selection of the course delivery methods.
- 6.3.7 The alignment of the proposed courses to WSU's vision, mission, and goals must be assessed. Similarly, the availability of requisite competencies, infrastructure and other resources within the institution must be evaluated before approving a SLP.
- 6.3.8 Statements of intended learning outcomes, clearly describing the knowledge, skills, and competencies that participants should expect to acquire from a short course must be formulated and reduced to writing. Such statements provide the focal points for instruction and learning in the WSU SLP arena.
- 6.3.9 SLP learning outcomes must be arranged in a recognisable and logical sequence from entry-level to exit level so that participants would be able to gauge their progress towards achieving them in the process of learning at WSU.
- 6.3.10 The possible impacts of the SLP must be determined. An impact is how the learning outcomes can be utilised and applied by the participants in settings other than the learning environment, for

example, in a work environment. Learning outcomes and impacts are the cornerstones on which sound short courses are premised.

- 6.3.11 An 'educational concept' must be developed detailing the level at which a short course is to be pitched (for example cognitive level, affection level and psycho-motor level as in the Bloom's Taxonomy), admission requirements, possible course content, course duration, learning activities, course material, teaching methods, division of course into theory and practical components, and assessment criteria as well as techniques.
- 6.3.12 An effective mechanism for obtaining, recording, and analysing feedback from students, employers, sponsors, and other stakeholders on all aspects of a short course, must be developed and articulated. Such feedback plays a critical role in the review and evaluation of the short courses for continuous improvement at WSU.
- 6.3.13 A degree of flexibility must be built into the design and development of short courses to allow for their customisation to particular client organisations or government departments that might require the courses to be delivered 'in-house'. Due care is exercised to ensure that the 'customised' short courses retain all of the conceptual and theoretical components of the original courses as approved by Senate.
- 6.3.14 Newly developed SLPs must be benchmarked against similar ones that are already on offer at other HEI's, either locally or internationally.
- 6.3.15 Annual budget plans must be prepared to detail anticipated costs of offering each SLP; the revenue that the course is expected to

generate; and contingency plans on how to meet possible short-falls, or how to handle potential surplus.

6.3.16 Standardised course design templates are developed by the WSUDSLP, and such templates must be used consistently across the institution.

6.4 Systems for course approval and registration

6.4.1 Approval and registration of short courses at WSU are achieved by formal mechanisms in terms of internally vetting short courses and recognising those that meet the minimum requirements.

6.4.2 CIBs may offer only those short courses that are approved and registered at the level of the institution.

6.4.3 The Faculty Academic Board assesses proposals for the introduction of new short courses by a CIB, and draws up recommendations in this regard, for submission to the WSUDSLP.

6.4.4 The WSUDSLP considers the recommendations received from the relevant Faculty Academic Board and recommends to SSLPC those proposed short courses that meet the requirements, as stipulated in the Policy. SSLPC gives a recommendation to the Senate for final approval.

6.4.5 'Provisional approval' for the introduction of a new short course in cases where there is a reasonable justification for the course to start running before the next scheduled meeting of the SSLPC may be given via a special meeting of SSLPC. Such 'provisional approval' is subject to ratification by Senate at its next sitting.

- 6.4.6 Where short courses are developed jointly by WSU and one or more HEI, approval is sought from each of the partnering institutions. The partnering institutions also sign a memorandum of agreement with WSU that reflects the respective responsibilities of each, in the delivery of the courses
- 6.4.6 An approval to introduce and offer a short course is valid for five (5) years at a time; after which a new authorisation is sought. This is intended to encourage a process of continuous improvement.
- 6.4.7 The Director of the WSUDSLP is delegated the authority to grant re-approval of a short course if up to 50% of the original course content remains in place after the five (5) year period. In cases where the course might have changed substantially, such that less than 50% of the original course content remains in place, then the application process for the re-approval is the same as for the application process for the initial approval.
- 6.4.8 A register of approved short courses is maintained by WSUDSLP. Such a register reflects the identity number of each short course, the date on which the course was approved, and the date on which the validity of approval lapses. It also reflects, for each short course, the name of the responsible CIB as well the name of the course leader.
- 6.4.9 The short course register is accorded appropriate security measures to prevent unauthorised access and possible tampering with the data there-in.
- 6.4.10 The short course register is updated continuously as newly approved courses are added to it, and discontinued ones are taken off.

6.4.11 A system for monitoring compliance with approval and registration requirements is put in place by WSUDSLP to assist with ensuring that CIBs offer only those short courses that are approved and registered.

6.5 Teaching and learning resources and processes

The following must be addressed during the design and offering of an SLP at WSU:

6.5.1 The CIB offering the SLP must ensure a physical environment that caters for the comfort and other unique needs of the short course participants, and that also complies with relevant health and safety regulations, which is critical to stimulate active learning, unless such SLP is offered purely online.

6.5.2 WSU will ensure participant access to library facilities, reference material and additional instructional media, which is essential in enhancing effective learning in most short courses.

6.5.3 The SLP provider must select the most appropriate course delivery method, which is fundamental in ensuring effective results of teaching and learning.

6.5.4 The SLP provider must ensure the availability of sufficient numbers of course instructors or facilitators who are also adequately qualified and/or experienced in the relevant subject areas.

6.5.5 Unless a particular SLP is offered purely online, adequate physical resources, consistent with the intended learning outcomes of the respective short courses, are to be made available for the running of the short courses where they meet institutional approval.

- 6.5.6 Unless a SLP is offered purely online, the physical resources and infrastructure that are provided must adequately address participants' physical comfort and other unique needs. Access arrangements must be made for participants with health-related, learning, physical, psychiatric, or sensory disabilities.
- 6.5.7 Short course delivery venues outside the usual premises of WSU (off-site or off-campus venues) are sourced when necessary, and such off-campus sites meet all legal requirements including those associated with health and safety.
- 6.5.8 Short course participants are advised of the availability of library facilities, multimedia material, ICT facilities, studios, tutorial rooms and additional relevant teaching and learning media; and their access to such facilities must be arranged.
- 6.5.9 Sufficient numbers of suitably qualified and/or experienced course instructors or facilitators are mobilised or sourced to instruct participants who are registered for the short courses. The short course instructors or facilitators are selected from internal faculty and also, where necessary, from external professionals with relevant expertise. The qualifications and experience of the external course instructors are verified before being hired.
- 6.5.10 The Dean must monitor the availability of internal faculty to teach short courses and that such does not compromise their availability to teach in formal programmes that lead to qualifications on the HEQSF.
- 6.5.11 Contracts of short course instructors or facilitators are processed through the institutional Human Resource Management Office on

recommendations of the Dean concerned. The recommendations are submitted through the WSUDSLP.

- 6.5.12 Online timetables for short courses specify the times when each learning outcome will be addressed to give assurance to participants and/or their sponsors, that the delivery of the courses is designed to support the achievement of the specified learning outcomes.
- 6.5.13 The short course instructors or facilitators consider, among other factors, the academic background, presumed prior learning and individual needs of participants, in deciding on the instructional material, media and other learning technologies to be used in the delivery of any particular short course.
- 6.5.14 The most preferred teaching methods in the delivery of short courses are those that promote active learning; allow for feedback to be provided to participants regarding their progress; facilitate participants' understanding of the relationships between the concepts presented and their application in real life, and speed up participants' progression from simple to more complex levels of development.
- 6.5.15 A mixture of delivery methods may be used, where appropriate, to optimise the learning process and experience. Included in such a combination are traditional face-to-face engagement modes such as lectures and tutorials; online learning; and audio-visual learning packages.
- 6.5.16 Practical, field-based, or work-based components of relevant short courses are integrated into the main courses and are linked directly to the learning outcomes of the respective courses.

6.6 Assessment strategy and procedure

The following must be addressed during the design and offering of an SLP at WSU:

- 6.6.1 Assessment is an integral part of short course delivery as it is how participants' progression concerning learning outcomes is evaluated. It is also how the participants' overall achievement in a course is assessed.
- 6.6.2 Adherence to the principles of objectivity, fairness, transparency, validity, reliability, authenticity, practicality, and flexibility is essential for the assessment to be credible.
- 6.6.3 A proper balance between instructional time and assessment time is critical since short courses typically run for limited periods.
- 6.6.4 Assessment must be incorporated into the teaching and learning experience to optimise the use of the relatively short time allocated to short courses, and also to assist in identifying areas that require emphasis or more focused attention.
- 6.6.5 The short course instructors or facilitators must be trained in the appropriate assessment methods before them administering assessment as part of the teaching process. They must comply with the *WSU Assessment Policy and its Associated Procedures*.
- 6.6.6 Schedules, methods and processes of assessment must communicate to participants at the beginning of a course.
- 6.6.7 Less structured formative methods of assessment may be used at all stages of the delivery of short courses to assess participants' progression in relation to the learning outcomes. Such practices include question and answer sessions, group discussions, self-

assessment questionnaires, quizzes, presentations, and take homework.

- 6.6.8 After the formative assessment activities, the participants, must be provided with timely, constructive, and fair feedback on their progress concerning the learning outcomes of the respective courses.
- 6.6.9 More structured summative assessment methods must be employed at the end of short courses to assess participants' overall learning achievement in the specific courses. Such practices include exams, projects, and portfolios.
- 6.6.10 Where summative assessment methods are used, special attention must be given to the accurate recording of, and fair reporting on, the performance and achievement of short course participants.
- 6.6.11 All short course participants are expected to take part in the less structured formative assessment activities. However, participation in the more structured summative assessment activities is optional. Those who take part and are successful in the summative assessments are eligible to receive certificates of competence.
- 6.6.12 Feedback on the assessment methods, instruments, and processes must be obtained from short course participants who have gone through the assessment, as well as from other relevant parties. This feedback must be analysed, and the results form the basis for further improvement of the assessment system.

- 6.7.4 Certification represents WSU's testimony attesting that the participants concerned duly completed certain specified short courses.
- 6.7.5 The integrity of the certification process is critical in ensuring that stakeholders and the broader society attach credibility to and show confidence in the value of the certificates that are issued by WSU.
- 6.7.6 The end product of the certification process is the issuing of certificates to participants who complete short courses offered by WSU. The process is based on participants' records of attendance, or records of both participation as well as learning achievement.
- 6.7.7 The integrity of the certification process is guaranteed by the WSU secure participant records system which includes a full audit trail of participants' attendance and/or learning achievement; and a proper record of communication from a relevant committee or office that recommends the issuing of certificates to deserving short course participants.
- 6.7.8 The design and format of the certificates, the process of issuing them and the delegation of authority for signing them; are determined at an institutional level and not at the level of a faculty or a department or CIB.
- 6.7.9 The preparation, ordering and printing of certificates is coordinated and overseen by the central institutional office with clear lines of accountability and responsibility.
- 6.7.10 Certificates of attendance or participation are issued to participants who have attended and/or participated in classes and other learning activities associated with the respective short courses, including formative assessments. These certificates do

not denote achievement of the learning outcomes. Thus, participants cannot use them as confirmation of their competence in the subject matter of the respective short courses.

6.7.11 Certificates of competence are issued based on the outcome of formal structured summative assessments. These certificates signify that the participants have attained the required learning achievement from the specific short courses. Thus, they are taken to denote the bearers' competence in the subject matter of the respective short courses.

6.7.12 At the beginning of a short course, participants must be provided with information on the requirements for certificates of attendance and competence, respectively. They are also to be informed about the possibility of making up for missed classes or learning activities (to be eligible for a certificate of attendance), and about the possibility of repeating failed summative assessments (to qualify for a certificate of competence).

6.7.13 Short course certificates have the same design and security features as those for formal qualifications completed at WSU. They, however, bear the following distinct sets of information:

- i. Name of the issuing institution.
- ii. A clear designation of certificate: either 'certificate of attendance' or 'certificate of competence'.
- iii. Names and registration details of the participant who is being certificated.
- iv. The full title of the short course.

- v. Short course identity number from the WSU short course register.
- vi. Duration of the short course (including an indication of the length of practical and/or work-based components).
- vii. Level of achievement (for example, cum laude) if it is a certificate of competence.
- viii. Designations and signatures of duly delegated officials; and
- ix. Date of issue of the certificate.

6.7.14 Certificates of competence are issued together with academic transcripts which provide a detailed record of the achievement levels attained by the short course participants in the various assessments that are attached to the course outcomes.

6.8 Records management

6.8.1 Commitment to the maintenance of complete and accurate records of courses and participants is critical in enhancing the credibility, reputation, integrity, and value of the short courses offered by WSU.

6.8.2 The long-term integrity of course and participant records is essential. It is dependent on securing them from the possibility of being tampered with, being damaged by fire, and other disasters.

6.8.3 Staff members who are involved in the short course value chain must keep comprehensive and accurate records on relevant

aspects, including registration, attendance, participation and achievement in assessments, and course completion.

6.8.4 All records must be integrated into a limited-access database for short courses which is maintained and managed centrally as a subset of the overall information management system for WSU.

6.8.5 The short course records and data management system is designed in such a way that reports on participants' attendance and/or achievements in any particular course, can be generated and made available to participants and/or their sponsors, upon request.

6.8.6 High-level security is accorded to all records at all times to prevent the possibility of having some of the records lost or being tampered with in one way or another.

6.8.7 The CIB that offers any particular short course must keep files containing copies of all publicity and advertising material used for marketing short courses; course attendance lists; all course information and material used including assessment and outcomes of assessments; copies of completed course evaluation questionnaires; and copies of compliments and/or complaints from participants and/or sponsors.

6.9 Monitoring and review mechanisms

6.9.1 The quality management of short courses is a cyclic process that continues throughout the duration of any particular course in a formative manner, as well as in a summative manner at the end of a course.



- 6.9.2 The processes of monitoring and review provide data and information that serve as the basis for charting the appropriate pathways for the continuous improvement of the different activities in the short course value chain.
- 6.9.3 The WSUDSLP drives and oversees the process of monitoring and review of short courses.
- 6.9.4 Clear monitoring and review processes and procedures are formulated by the WSUDSLP and are used consistently to ensure that quality is never compromised.
- 6.9.5 Monitoring and review are undertaken in a timely and thorough fashion to obtain accurate and sufficient evidence on which to base any improvement plans.
- 6.9.4 Course evaluation questionnaires are to be administered to participants, employers and/or sponsors provide critical information on all aspects of the design and delivery of short courses. They also provide information on overall participants' experience, as well as on the impact of the courses on participants' attitude, behaviour and performance outside the teaching and learning environment.
- 6.9.5 Short courses are formally reviewed periodically, at least every five (5) years, to establish the extent to which they meet the intended objectives, and the extent to which they remain relevant to, or in tune with, developments in the micro and macro environments. The WSUDSLP monitors this process.
- 6.9.6 Where feasible reviews are to be undertaken by panels whose composition includes external experts in the relevant fields, as

well as representatives of key stakeholders (for example, representatives of employers and key sponsors of participants).

6.9.7 The results of the monitoring and review processes must be used to inform the development of quality improvement plans that cover the entire short course value chain, from course design, through course delivery to a course evaluation and assessment of impacts.

7. POLICY CONTROL

7.1 Roles

7.1.1 The owner of this Policy is the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Academic Affairs and Research, whose role is to:

- a) oversee the development of the Policy and its related strategies and procedures.
- b) ensure the creation of documents necessary to support short learning programmes and ensure that same is freely available.
- c) ensure that the Policy curator functions effectively; and
- d) appoint a task team for the periodic revision of the Policy document, as required.

7.1.2 The curator of this Policy is the Director: WSUDSLP or a senior professional academic support services staff member who is familiar with WSU's strategy for SLP's and is appointed by the DVC: AAR.

7.1.3 The curator is responsible for:

- a) ensuring the proper and effective formulation, approval, revision, communication, release, and monitoring of the