

## Conceptualizing a Staff Development Agenda for the Professionalisation of Teaching at a South African University: Attempts at an Action Plan

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**ABSTRACT** This study was inspired by the author's participation in a Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education course at one South African University. As part of the requirements for the successful completion of the Diploma, one had to design an educational development agenda for a university. Using the Archerian social realist theoretical framework this paper conceptualises an agenda for the professional development of academics in their role as teachers at the University of Higher Learning. The study argues that while structures can be put in place, it is the agency enacting those structural roles and working in the domain of culture that can actualize an educational development agenda. Based on this argument, the study recommends a commitment from management as key agents in the provision of resources for the implementation of the proposed educational staff development agenda.

### INTRODUCTION

The establishment of the Educational Development Centre at the University of Higher Learning was a result of pressure from the Minister of Higher Education and Training to improve throughput rates according to the University of Higher Learning Self Evaluation Report (SER 2010). The newly established Educational Development Centre (EDC) is the first step towards a comprehensive coordinated staff development strategy for the university. Previous attempts at educational development have been fragmented and uncoordinated (Educational Development Centre Business Plan 2012-2016). At the level of structure, the university council has officially approved the establishment of the Educational Development Centre. According to the Educational Development Centre Council Approved Proposal (2009), the institutional success in improving the quality of teaching and learning will depend on establishing coordinated collaborations of programmes and services that are al-

ready in place so as to ensure a systematic campus-wide approach to increasing student success rates and that it is also important to build agency in academics through ensuring that staff possesses requisite skills to teach students who come to University academically under-prepared. This will enable the university to prepare for the just commenced Council on Higher Education (2014)'s quality enhancement project which replaces institutional audits, who have designated one of their focus areas as enhancing student support and development which will include looking at how *career and curriculum advising, life and academic skills development, counselling, student performance monitoring and referral are conducted in universities*.

The Council Approved Proposal (2009) further states that it is therefore important that the envisaged Educational Development Centre adopts a holistic approach which also incorporates a unit that will take care of the induction of new academic staff and continued professional training and development for all academics. The proposed Centre is conceptualised as a comprehensive establishment which would offer a holistic range of programmes and services on teaching and learning to guarantee continuous improvement in throughput and graduation rates from the University of Higher Learning. The aim of this paper is share some thoughts on attempts at development of the agenda for the professionalisation of teaching at the case study Universi-

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ty by the Academic Development Unit. The case study university is referred to in both the paper, citation of documents and the reference list as the University of Higher Learning (UHL) to protect its identity.

### Conceptual Framework

This paper uses Archer (1995, 1996, 2000)'s social realist analytical framework to propose an educational development agenda for the professionalisation of teaching and learning under the three social realist analytical concepts of structure, culture and agency. Archer (2000) distinguishes between the people (agents) and the parts (structure and culture). Agents coming into the scene (such as new educational development practitioners joining the educational development centre), inherit a set of doctrines, theories and beliefs which dictate what can have an impact on them and these shape what agents can do (Quinn 2006). In the same vein, linking this to higher education Ndebele (2014a) explains that challenges facing the higher education sector can be found to be partly emanating from inherited structures and cultural entrenchments leading to enthusiasm by some and resistance by other agents to the transformation agenda.

The structural domain in Archer's social realist theory comprises things, which exist in the institution such as policies, committees, educational development centres and sub structures within the centres such as specialised units. These structures, as Danermark et al. (2002:181) show, constrain and enable the actions of the agents (for example the educational developers), and in turn, agents reproduce and transform structures. The cultural milieu comprises how and what we think about things. This includes values, beliefs, attitudes, ideas, ideologies, theories and concepts which are manifest through discourses used by particular people at particular times (Quinn 2012; Boughey 2010).

Agency, according to Archer (1996) refers to the personal and psychological makeup of individuals, their social roles and relates to the capacity people have to act in voluntary ways. Agents can engage in concerted action to reshape or retain the structural or cultural features they inherit. Using examples from the educational development field, Quinn (2006:52) illustrates how; *Agents can have causal influences through the effects of the social groups to which they*

*belong (for example, the Educational Development Unit (EDU) staff as a group); actors (for example, the director of the EDU), on the other hand, have the capacity for causal impact through their individual properties and powers given the roles and positions they occupy and the ways in which they occupy them.* This analytical theoretical framework is used at the level of agency to analyse the role of educational developers in propagating an educational development agenda for the professionalisation of teaching at a South African University.

### CREATING AN ACADEMIC STAFF DEVELOPMENT AGENDA IN THE UNIVERSITY

#### Academic Development Unit

A unit in the new Educational Development Centre, the Academic Development Unit is mandated to promote academic programmes and services that are intended to empower staff and students to participate successfully in the process of teaching and learning. The following are the unit's key functions with regards to the professionalisation of teaching:

- ♦ Promote research into key issues of teaching and learning
- ♦ Train staff on the modalities of career focused education
- ♦ Offer a series of staff development courses on effective teaching (EDC Business Plan 2012-2016)

In terms of the structure of the Educational Development Centre a proposed organogram has been submitted to the university. The Director: EDC assisted by a Chief Administration officer, will report to the DVC Academic and will have three heads of department under him/her. The Head of Department (HOD) of the Academic Development Unit will have 8 Staff Development Practitioners (one attached to each of the eight schools), an eLearning instructional designer working across the whole institution and a Career Focused Education Practitioner working with staff across the whole institution.

At the level of structure the relationship that the Centre will have with schools and administrative departments will play a vital role in enhancing its visibility as well as ensure its impact on the institutional core business of teaching and learning. A sub structure of Senate called

the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee has just been established. The inaugural Senate Teaching and Learning Committee meeting deliberated on four key teaching and learning issues namely: the New Staff Academic Preparation programme, The Vice Chancellor's Excellence in Teaching awards, the Student Academic Excellence awards for returning students and the initiative to introduce targeted academic support to all first year students repeating a module from the previous year (Senate Teaching and Learning Committee minutes 2012). At school level, School Teaching and Learning Committees which will report to the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee are also being established. The years 2011 and 2012 were mainly for putting structures in place to enable the operationalisation of the Centre's mandate. The Centre's Business/ strategic plan has now been developed for the next five years and presented to school boards for input and buy in and has been positively received (See Table 1 for an extract from the Business plan).

The relationship between the new Centre and existing university structures however needs to be carefully negotiated. According to the Quality Assurance (QA) EDC Report (2009) at the level of structure and agency, when the proposal was presented to school boards for the establishment of the new centre, there was intense debate as some agents thought the new centre would take over some of their responsibilities and make them redundant specifically the Communication Studies module offered to all first year students in the university and the extended degree programme. According to the report (2009:5), *The majority of the members argued that the EDC would do better by concentrating on issues which are directly related to classroom teaching and learning processes (including special education teaching and learning methodologies.* This narrow conception of educational development warns of likely resistance to some of the intended EDC programmes. In this regard, Quinn (2012) cited in Maphosa (2014) observes that academic staff members in universities generally resist attempts at programmes to professionally enhance their skills in the area of teaching and learning.

At the level of structure, a proposal has already been submitted and approved to have the EDC director sit in key committees that deal with

academic staff development. The director of the EDC sits on the following university committees:

- ♦ Senate Executive Committee (SENEX)
- ♦ Senior Management committee (SMC)
- ♦ Senate
- ♦ Academic Division
- ♦ Staff Development Committee
- ♦ Newly established Senate Teaching and Learning Committee

This positions the director strategically to influence the teaching and learning agenda in general and the staff development agenda in particular. The inclusion of the EDC director in these structures shows commitment from senior management for the success of the educational development agenda. In this regard, Holt, Palmer and Challis (2011:9) argue that,

*Centre leadership, including a university senior executive charged with the responsibility of teaching and learning, is well placed to play a strategic role in initiating and developing an organisational teaching and learning network supportive of, and complementary to, the formal structures and governance of the institution. Through a more purposeful and systematic approach to designing and implementing teaching and learning networks, centres can magnify their impact through the many agents (people and resources) that can be productively drawn into their numerous and varied relationships.*

Such people as deans, heads of departments and academics who particularly appear to have innate interest in teaching and learning are some of the agents, the EDC director has started having conversations with in the university. In order to act as the 'central hub' (Holt, Palmer and Challis 2011) of the university's teaching and learning network the EDC director has deployed educational development practitioners in virtually every committee, task team or institutional initiative related to teaching and learning at school, departmental and programme levels.

In the domain of culture, in relation to staff development, the EDC is responsible for developing programmes to transform the teaching and learning culture including formal qualifications, teaching methods in higher education, short courses in teaching and learning in higher education such as curriculum and material design, assessment methods, teaching and learning technologies, including e-learning and classroom research (Table 1). Staff in the EDC will make delib-

**Table 1: Three year suggested action plan for the professional development of academics in their role as teachers at the University of Higher Learning**

| <i>Key performance area</i>                   | <i>Key performance indicator</i>  | <i>2012</i>  | <i>2013</i>   | <i>2014</i>   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| <i>Capacity Development of Academic Staff</i> | Implement a new staff academic preparation programme for new staff                                  | Piloting a new staff academic preparation programme for new staff                | Refine and implement an academic staff preparation programme for new staff                        | Evaluate academic staff preparation programme   |
|   | Establish a staff peer mentoring programme  | Design peer mentoring guidelines   | Pilot a staff peer mentoring programme in the university with selected staff                      | Refine and implement peer mentoring programme across the institution                                |
|   | Review the programme for the evaluation of Teaching and Modules by students across the institution  | Workshops with academics on the evaluation of teaching with a select pilot staff | All teaching staff to be assessed by students in at least one module they teach                   | All teaching staff to be assessed by students in at least two module they teach                     |
|   | Establish a staff peer evaluation programme   | Benchmarking on peer evaluation  | Pilot peer evaluation in 4 schools.   | Implement peer evaluation   |
| <i>Teaching and Learning Environment</i>      | Review of teaching and learning policies  | Review of the teaching and learning policy                                       | Workshops with academics on teaching and learning policies  | Implement reviewed Teaching and Learning policies   |
|   | Teaching and Learning approaches  | Review resources and approaches for large teaching                               | Implement new approaches for large teaching   | Evaluate impact of new approaches   |
|   | Conduct Workshops with staff on Teaching and Learning issues  | Workshops in assessor, moderator, curriculum development and Facilitation        | Evaluate impact of training on teaching practice  | Identify other training needs   |
|   | Design a Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education (PGDHE) for academic staff                       | Design PGDHE programme for academic staff  | Apply for the registration of PGDHE through the University processes                              | Offer credit bearing PGDHE short courses to academics   |
|   | Promote the use of ICT in Teaching and Learning   | Develop e-learning policy.   | Approval of eLearning Policy<br>Support academics reviewing curriculum to integrate eLearning     | Support the implementation of e-Learning methodology across the institution                         |
|   | Promote excellence in teaching and learning   | Develop criteria for awards for excellence in teaching and learning .            | Introduce awards for excellence in teaching and learning  | Continue the awards for excellence in teaching and learning   |
|   | <i>EDC Integration into university structures/business</i>  | EDC representation on relevant committees/structures:                            | Participate in the said committees. Submit teaching and learning related issues to the committees | Participate in the said committees<br>Submit teaching and learning related issues to the committees |
| <i>Human Resources Development</i>            | Identification of staff training needs and arranging for training and evaluating impact of training | Identify EDC training needs  | Arrangement of training workshops on Academic development support skills for EDC staff            | Monitor and evaluate impact of training on performance  |

erate efforts to create awareness of contemporary teaching and learning discourses through conversations with academics at both formal and informal levels. Notwithstanding the criticism leveled against the constructivist theories and the deep and surface approaches to learning theories the researcher feels lecturers need to be exposed to these ideas from the literature on teaching and learning in addition to exposure to the more contemporary academic literacy theories. Maphosa and Wadesango (2014) recommend that academic developers should provide platforms on which academics in the university engage in conversation about teaching and learning, arguing that adequately professionally developed teachers ultimately reflect on their practice thereby developing into scholarly teachers. Educational development practitioners in the EDC will provoke discussions around the scholarship of teaching and learning, for example, during lunch hour seminar presentation series. The EDC undertakes to engage in collaborative research with academics on teaching and learning issues such as student attendance, student dishonesty e.g. in exams, assessment practices, e-Learning initiatives and workshops with academics on teaching and learning.

As already indicated in a preceding paragraph, the director of the EDC sits on various committees that deal with teaching and learning, curriculum, assessment and quality assurance issues and the professional development of academics. One of the committees is Senate, which is the body charged with academic governance and planning. The director belongs to the following subcommittees of Senate which are directly linked to the implementation of the teaching and learning agenda including the professional development of academics; Executive Committee of Senate (SENEX), Academic Planning Committee, Quality Assurance Board and the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee which has just been established. The Academic Planning Committee is responsible for the approval of any changes to existing programmes and scrutiny of any new programme applications before these can be tabled before Council. As a member of this committee, the director of the EDC plays a significant role in ensuring that the curriculum is aligned. He/She specifically focuses on the alignment between learning outcomes, content, teaching methodology and assessment criteria to ensure that these are explicit and talk

to each other. Where there is need for improvement the EDC then arranges for consultations with lecturers concerned to assist them improve their submissions.

In the domain of structure, according to the Centre's newly developed strategic plan, the Educational Development practitioners from the EDC will sit in various school committee structures such as the School Teaching and Learning Committee and the School Quality Assurance Committee, while the director sits in similar committees at institutional level. This offers the centre opportunities to influence the culture of the institution in relation to teaching and learning as through such committees the EDC will be responsible for driving the review of teaching and policies including policies related to the quality of teaching and learning assessment, curriculum development and providing implementation support to enhance teaching and learning quality.

While at the level of structure, educational development seems to be recognised in the university as evidenced by the number of committees that the director of the Educational Development Centre sits on, it appears it is in the domains of culture and agency that work still needs to be done. In the domain of culture, the major focus of the EDC will have to be on building of staff capacity on university teaching and learning policies and procedures; ensuring implementation support for the policies and procedures across schools and departments and providing support for improving the quality of teaching and learning in collaboration with the Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance Directorate (IPQA). As South African Universities Vice Chancellors Association (SAUVCA)' National Quality Assurance Forum (2002), advises, across the university people need to be informed about concepts of quality and the need for quality assurance. According to Woodhouse (2013) cited in Shava and Ndebele (2014) quality assurance denotes the policies, attitudes, actions and procedures necessary to ensure that quality is maintained and enhanced.

Harvey and Green (1993:16) call for quality culture and define it as one in which everybody in the organisation, not just the quality controllers, is responsible for quality. They argue that a quality culture involves devolution of responsibility for quality to everyone in the organisation. This can be achieved through fostering a range of communities of practice around quality issues

in the institution at different levels, on different topics of interest and in relation to different faculties, schools, disciplines and campuses (Holt et al. 2011).

In addition to the strategic positioning of educational development at institutional level shown above, the Centre sees its role at faculty and school level as building agency through working with and empowering the academics in teaching and learning, assessment, curriculum development and implementation and the quality assurance of their work. Maphosa and Mudzielwana (2014) argue that discipline expertise by university academics does not necessarily translate into teaching expertise since teaching and learning is a field with its own theories, principles and discourse. They therefore call for the need for university academics to be adequately prepared for the teaching of the disciplines in line with appropriate philosophies and methodologies of teaching. As Scott et al. (2007: 61) recommend, there needs to be a sufficient number of educational specialists, at appropriate academic levels, to provide specialised educational design and teaching services, to provide professional development opportunities, and to disseminate systematic educational knowledge within the groupings of academic staff, departments or programme teams, that are responsible for mainstream provision. Scott, Yeld and Henry (ibid: 61) argue that:

*There is an important need for a sound level of educational expertise in a number of mainstream academics...sufficient for effectively leading and managing the design and delivery of mainstream courses and programmes, and guiding the selection and work of programme and large-course teams.*

As the authorities above show, one way to empower the academics is to professionalise their teaching through formal credit bearing courses on teaching and learning, assessment and curriculum development and implementation. The EDC has already initiated efforts to build staff capacity in this regard. The centre has been running various workshop series and credit bearing short courses. When a call was sent out by the Department of Higher Education and training inviting universities to submit applications for funding through the teaching development grant, the University, through the Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC) Academic developed a proposal which indicated the need to increase the number

of academics with qualifications in teaching and learning in higher education. It is the university's conviction that although workshops can provide academics with useful insights into teaching and learning issues, a full diploma will result in academic's sustained long term engagement with educational theory and practice. The proposal was approved and the University through coordination from the EDC in 2013 enrolled twenty academics representing all schools for the post graduate diploma in higher education at another University that already has the qualification while still conceptualising its own. This is a capacity building exercise as the university prepares to design its own post graduate diploma with the intention of enlisting the services of those who will graduate to eventually teach in the diploma in addition to helping spread the educational development agenda in the university.

The Head of the Staff Training and Development Unit has also been a key agent driving staff development initiatives in the university prior to the establishment of the EDC. The establishment of the EDC which also has as its priority academic staff development has created constraints at the level of agency with Staff Training and Development Unit in relation to the apportioning of roles with a recent example of case, where after another university was sub-contracted to offer short courses, there was conflict as to why the facilitators from the subcontracted university communicated directly with the EDC director instead of the Staff Training and Development Unit. It is therefore crucial that the roles of the structures involved in educational development in the institution be clearly clarified. Like in the case of the Staff Training and Development Unit cited above similar tension was found in a study conducted by Ndebele (2014c) to determine the role clarity between the Educational Development Centre and the Quality Assurance Unit at the University of Higher Learning. Three out of the four respondents interviewed felt there was no role clarity in the university between the Educational Development Centre and the Quality Assurance Unit with one respondent indicating that there was overlap in some instances signaling need for the activities of the two structures to be streamlined explicitly. The EDC has since attempted to clarify at the level of structure and agency its role in relation to these two entities (staff training and quality assurance). A recent

collaboration between the Staff Training and Development Unit and the EDC in which a new staff induction programme was held jointly helped to clarify the roles of the sections.

The recent institutional audit by the Higher Educational Quality Committee (HEQC) has provided leverage for the EDC director to exercise agency in educational development. Following the HEQC Institutional Audit in 2010, the director of the EDC was asked to lead a task team that developed an improvement plan for a recommendation related to assessment. The Audit Report (2011) recommends that the University of Higher Learning establish appropriate mechanisms and provide resources to ensure that the assessment policies and procedures are applied consistently across the institution, and that sufficient examining capacity and adherence to procedures exist to guarantee that high success rates match actual student competencies. This has been used by the Centre to justify why academics need professional development in general and in assessment in particular. The major focus of the improvement plan in terms of this recommendation therefore will have to be on building of staff capacity on university assessment policies and procedures; ensuring consistent implementation of the assessment processes and procedures across schools and departments; improving the quality assurance of assessment; promoting timely provision of feedback on students' assessment in order to capture the developmental value of assessments; managing communication effectively between the examinations department, internal and external examiners and the implementation of a moderation system for non-final year module exam question papers, scripts, and mark sheets

The Council on Higher Education (CHE)'s next round of institutional audits with its focus on teaching and learning is a leverage the EDC intends to use to gain entry into the quality assurance arena in the university through showcasing expertise during the preparation process for the next round of audits. According to the Draft Criteria for the Second Round of Institutional Audits (2011:4), the second round of audits is intended to support pedagogic and curriculum innovation as well as the professionalisation of teaching and learning and the recognition of academic staff involved in teaching and learning. In a recent publication, the CHE (2014) isolated four focus areas for the second round

of institutional audits now dubbed the Quality Enhancement project (QEP). The first focus area examines efforts at enhancing academics as teachers, *including professional development, reward and recognition, workload, conditions of service and performance appraisal, secondly* enhancing student support and development which will include looking at how *career and curriculum advising, life and academic skills development, counselling, student performance monitoring and referral are conducted in universities*. The CHE's third focus area, titled 'enhancing the learning environment' *analyses teaching and learning spaces, information communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and access, technology-enabled tools and resources and library facilities*. The fourth focus area looks at enhancing course and programme enrolment management, *including admissions, selection, placement, readmission refusal, pass rates in gateway courses, through-put rates and management information systems*. The CHETL director has already started exercising agency and has been appointed into a three member university team that oversees the implementation of the quality enhancement project in the university.

#### QUALITY ASSURING EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK

In order for educational development initiatives to gain credibility and acceptance in the university, there is need to quality assure and continue to improve and develop them. This can be achieved through a process of reflection by the educational development practitioners on their practice. Brookfield (1995) suggests that critical reflection requires an environment where the self-worth of the learner ( in this case the academics) is respected, where the curriculum is built around the needs and aspirations of learners and where learners are willing to have their own views challenged and feel safe to challenge others. Brookfield (1995: viii) identifies four lenses through which we can reflect on our practice,

*First there is the lens provided by autobiographical reflection. Our autobiographical experiences as learners and teachers provide a rich (though often unacknowledged and even derided) source of material for us to probe. Second there is the lens represented by our students' eyes. We find out from our students how*

*they perceive our actions and what it is about those actions that they find affirming or inhibiting. Third there is the lens provided by our colleagues' perceptions and experiences. We can ask colleagues to be mirrors, mentors or critical friends with whom we engage in critical conversations about our practice. In these conversations, our colleagues reflect back to different versions of the events we experience. The fourth lens involves viewing our practice through the lens of literature. We can read inside and outside our area of practice, to locate what we do within alternative theoretical frame works.*

In a reflective paper by Ndebele (2014b) analysing feedback from two lenses (students and peers), it was found that the feedback tended to converge. From both peers who observed his teaching and the peer who analysed student survey feedback on his teaching both peers and students lauded the knowledgeable ability of the subject matter, maintenance of good rapport with students, active involvement of the students in the teaching and learning process and encouraging students to reflect on their practices in the light of insights gained from the sessions.

Brookfield (1995:31), advises that it is a useful good starting point to examine our experiences as learners. He argues that we may think we are teaching according to a widely accepted curricular or pedagogic model, only to find, on reflection, that the foundations of our practice have been laid in our autobiographies as learners. The other three lenses of student eyes, peers and the literature seem to be more appropriate for the work of educational developers. One way in which the EDC has sought the views of clients (the academics) on its services is that evaluation forms are designed for all interventions and workshops which are then analysed and the implementation of the necessary corrective measures where applicable follows. At the University of Higher Learning, the EDC has also started leaning heavily on the shoulders of peers to reflect on our practice. In addition, the Educational Development Centre conducts regular benchmarking visits to other universities to see how they quality assure their own activities. Internally, when workshops are conducted measures are taken to ensure that other educational developers also attend and then provide feedback on peer facilitation skills. It is the Centre's belief that this culture of reflection and evaluation among

the educational development staff will hopefully have a knock on effect on lecturers.

In terms of research the EDC encourages collaborative research among educational developers on educational development work and several co-authored articles in this regard have been submitted to journals for possible publication. In addition, the Educational Development Practitioners have started conversations with academics on possible areas of collaborative research and the importance of research led teaching and learning. In this regard; more than 10 academics and educational developers presented various papers on teaching and learning at the Higher Education Learning and Teaching Association of Southern Africa (HELTSA) annual conference in November 2012 in Cape Town.

In addition, in order to build capacity in educational developers the EDC identifies appropriate staff development activities and sends staff for such development. During a recent application to the Department of Higher Education and Training for a teaching development grant, the researcher included the need for capacity development among educational developers and in this regard two educational developers and five academic Heads of Department have enrolled for the Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education for educational developers at another university for 2013 using the teaching development grant.

One major challenge facing the new Educational Development Centre is the challenge of finding adequately qualified and experienced educational development staff. The post of director for the Educational Development Centre was advertised three times without finding a suitable candidate, before it could be filled. In terms of the university's mandate to convert to a comprehensive university, a post of a Career Focused Educational Development Practitioner, who would be responsible for initiating staff development initiatives to empower the academics on the modalities of career focussed education, has still not been filled after four advertisements.

## CONCLUSION

The study concludes that developing an educational development agenda for a university is no easy task. Constraints in the domains of structure, culture and agency can militate against such an effort. While structures can be put in place, it is the agency enacting those structural



roles and working in the domain of culture that can actualize an educational development agenda. Based on this argument, the study recommends a commitment from management as key agents in the provision of resources for the implementation of the proposed educational staff development agenda to put in place the necessary structures and hire suitably qualified agents to drive the agenda.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the findings and conclusion above, the study recommends, firstly commitment from management as key agents in the provision of resources for the implementation of the proposed educational staff development agenda and secondly an integrated approach to educational development, staff training and quality assurance in order to promote cohesion, collaboration, avoid overlap and eliminate misunderstandings and tension identified among the three entities. Finally the paper recommends that the Educational Development Centre leverages on the Department of Higher Education and Training Teaching Development Grant funds (which it manages) to support the educational development agenda financially.

### LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

A limitation of this study could be that since it reflects on an educational development agenda developed by the reporting researcher there might not be enough critique of the agenda developed. This was however minimised through stakeholder involvement such as presenting the initial draft of the agenda at School Boards, the Senate Teaching and Learning Committee and Senate for input. Such input where applicable was incorporated into the plan (Table 1).

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The paper could not exhaust all issues relating to developing an agenda to professionalise teaching at university and opportunities for further research in this area are still abundant. Further research could look at the extent to which academics are involved in needs identification for their own professional development at university. Another possible study could look at

enabling and constraining conditions faced by key agents such as Deans and Heads of Departments in facilitating the development of lecturers as teachers in their faculties and departments.

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