

SAAIR

Short Courses, Short Learning Programmes & Continuing Education: Best practices, Quality and the Way Forward

Facilitated by Freda Daniels
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Concluding comments

- Full circle – 10 years later we end up where we started in 2007!
- So is this another talk-shop?
- New CHE Guidelines document; new policies introduced, i.e. CAT & RPL, yet no alignment with Continuing Education courses, although the Guidelines document recommends that courses could be used as evidence as part of an RPL process.
- Dismissal of the objectives of the NQF which include lifelong learning, access and mobility
- Lifelong learning is about offering integrated, holistic learning, which include non-formal and formal learning on the continuum.
- Marginalisation of non-formal learning devalues this type of learning
- CE/Short courses demand the same quality and administration management processes as the mainstream programmes.

The time is ripe to take the process forward!

Recommendations:

- Form a HE consortium/forum that can engage the regulatory bodies as a collective – more power as a collective rather than engaging as individual institutions. (However, we acknowledge that such a forum is not and should not be the only mechanism for recognition.)

- Forum enables collective communication with the regulatory environment (incl the DHET, CHE, SAQA , QCTO and SETAs) to take up the issue of recognition of non-formal learning.
- Build positive relationships with the regulatory environment and external roleplayers – communicate that we support the CHE Good Practice Guidelines, because we believe in the principles of quality management; however as a constituency we reviewed the document in order to suggest improvements and streamlining.

Purpose of the collective consortium

Advocacy, advice and peer evaluation

- Encourage responsible leadership and good governance of CE/short courses
- Promote self-regulation of quality management among peers
- Ensure that we all offer value for money for the benefit of our country
- Fitness for purpose

Possible benefits of a collective constituency

- Networking, sharing of best practices, risks & challenges
- Identifying gaps in the CE/short course landscape and finding common ground
- Engage on the regulation of issues such as levels, credits, articulation, etc. in line with NQF objectives
- Intention to bring as many as possible of interested stakeholders (public/private) on board

Provide access to a centralised system for recording CE/short courses (will not be needed by/applicable to all)

- Interested universities could make use of a common system or platform where CE/short courses can be recorded for the purposes of LLL, access and mobility.
- Forms the basis of a QMS – good quality practices

- Assist in verification of courses, certificates and learner records
- Self-sustaining – require a pay-per-use fee for use of platform which can be recovered directly from the course income

What does the establishment of the consortium require?

- Requires a willing host
- Independent capacity not linked to any particular institution
- Standing in the sector
- Recordkeeping and data exchange capabilities

Additional benefit to participating members - added internal value in the potential support of their processes, the external recognition of the joint quest for excellence and public recognition of the credibility of the products of participating institutions.

Open to other suggestions/ recommendations?

Agreed to form a HE Forum!

Open face-book page – do you have an interest? Yes!

Where do we link into your institution with your assistance?

Letter of invitation to be written to invite institutions to join the CE Forum.

No time to discuss what this forum should be called.

Participants will add names and contact details of institutional heads on the Facebook page.

Thank you!