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Output 3: Programme Framework for ECCE Qualifications (Diploma & Degree)

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Disclaimer

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Executive Summary

The Programme Framework in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is Output 3 in the Project for Inclusive Early Childhood Care and Education (PIECCE). This is a multi-stakeholder project funded by the European Union (EU) with university funding support from the Department of Higher Education (DHET). The overall objective of PIECCE is to contribute towards the professionalisation of birth to 4 with special reference to programmes in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The programme framework is informed by baseline findings on ECCE programmes in 14 teacher training institutions in 6 provinces in South Africa (SA), literature on ECCE teacher education as well as deliberations from PIECCE meetings.

The main purpose of the Programme Framework in ECCE for ITE is to provide guidelines to assist with more standardised development of the Diploma and the Degree in ECCE to be offered by HEIs. This purpose must be understood in the current landscape of high fragmentation and concerns for preparation of a workforce that is responsive to the complexities and the variabilities in the ECCE context. The framework presents 10 chapters to address multiple facets that are necessary to consider to build the potential of a quality ECCE workforce for birth to 4 - equipped with the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions for personal development and for quality practice in diverse contexts.

Chapter 1 introduces the programme framework as an output of the PIECCE project. It presents the different drivers informing the programme framework and provides the structure and themes.

Chapter 2 deals with the context and principles that should guide programme development. Five contextual issues are discussed to show the relevance for a programme framework of this nature. The PIECCE principles of quality, inclusivity and collaboration together with the principles in the *Policy on Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for ECD Educators* - PMRP (2017) are viewed as relevant to guiding ECCE programme development. The main call is for the preparation of critically reflective teachers who are responsive to the diverse ECCE reality context in SA.

Chapter 3 presents the knowledge and practice standards for ECCE ITE as well as the 3 thematic aspects that frame the standards. These standards are developed from the PMRP (2017), a literature review on ECCE standards and community of practice deliberations from PIECCE meetings. The standards provide an opportunity to develop standardised programmes which address the current fragmentation in the field. These standards also need to feed into discussions on other related avenues of influence for a

systemic response to ECCE teacher education and workforce development. It is also envisaged that there would be an integrated and holistic response to the standards to improve the professional competence of ECCE teachers. There needs to be greater dialogue with South African Council for Educators (SACE) about their professional standards and synergies with the 10 knowledge and practice standards in the framework.

Chapter 4 aims at democratising the knowledge space in ECCE teacher education. Taking into account the importance of foregrounding African realities, promoting Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and building a sense of belonging for both ECCE professionals and the children they teach, ECCE teacher education has to be responsive to this local context. The chapter makes a case for the inclusion of marginalised knowledge bases and practices to shape a more inclusive teacher education curriculum.

Chapter 5 examines the concept of developmental education for the holistic development of the ECCE workforce. The chapter shows how areas such as foundational mathematics competencies, English reading and writing, information literacy, social-emotional skills and subject specific skills require attention. The themes from the framework e.g. standards, recognition of prior learning (RPL) and Work Integrated Learning (WIL) are used to show the kinds of student support that is required. Attention is also drawn to the structure of developmental education and the assessment strategy in the context of articulation with Diploma and the Degree in ECCE. The role of variety of key stakeholders is outlined to make developmental education workable.

Chapter 6 sheds light on the pedagogies that are relevant to support active student-centred learning in ECCE teacher education at HEIs. The chapter makes a call for a shift away from the overuse of the authoritative discourses in early childhood teacher education and transmissive pedagogies to more transformative pedagogies. A case is made for culturally responsive, inclusive and participatory pedagogies that are more affirming of how ECCE students should be trained for responsiveness to the realities that they will encounter in the field. There is a strong call for pedagogies and theories of change that create diversity awareness and critical engagement.

Chapter 7 discusses assessment as the lynchpin for gathering evidence of student learning. The chapter supports the view of assessment as a process to help students to develop their competences. The themes of professional knowledge, professional practice and professional mindsets, roles and responsibilities should frame assessment for and of learning. A variety of assessment techniques should be used to

support student teachers in their learning. Feedback is important to help them improve their performance.

Chapter 8 is about Work Integrated Learning (WIL). Three case studies, namely, from the HEI's, NGOs and TVETs are used to show the commonalities and differences in the current WIL component. The WIL should be structured using teaching practice standards and study guides that show a strong link between theory and practice. There should also be ample opportunities for reflective practice.

Chapter 9 considers modes of engagement for both programme development and materials design. Attention is drawn to the importance of considering engagement from the perspective of student support in all aspects of programme and material design. The administration and planning with regard to human resources, registration, online learning management, standards, pedagogies, WIL, RPL technology also discussed in an integrated way.

Chapter 10 draws attention to the importance of RPL in the context of equity, social justice and inclusion. The ECCE field is particularly in need of this form of access taking into account the history of the field. The design of the RPL for creating access is engaged with. The chapter also draws attention to the system that needs to be in place and the types of assessment that is relevant to the ECCE field.

In summary, this programme framework is a living document to be informed by the ECCE field for the field. It is therefore circulated for comments to ensure that many voices are heard to inform the new thrust to ECCE initial teacher education.

FIGURES and TABLES

ACRONYMS

AfL	Assessment for Learning
B.ED	Bachelor of Education
COP	Community of Practice
DHET	Department of Higher Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
EU	European Union
FETC	Further Education and Training Certificate
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
LMS	Learning Management System
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
NQF	National Qualification Framework
ODL	Open Distance Learning
PIECCE	Project for Inclusive Early Childhood Care and Education
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
SA	South Africa
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
WIL	Work Integrated Learning

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK FOR ECCE INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

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1.1 Opening lines

In a rapidly transforming societies, citizens are enabled to think critically and act responsibly to effect social change and to contribute to human development. Well-designed programmes in ECCE function as vehicles that open up opportunities for nurturing the youngest citizens in accordance with democratic values and principles. In South Africa, the increasing diversity means that ECCE is a complex field of intervention. Young children in early childhood settings come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities and cultures. They differ in their abilities and experiences. The South African ECCE workforce must therefore be adequately prepared to care for and to educate young children in all their diversity.

The development of a high quality workforce for birth to 4, however, is complex and variable. The training of the different ECCE workers lies in different sectors (education, health, social services) and in different institutions (non-governmental organisations (NGOs), Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions and private providers). There are polarisations and overlaps between sectors and institutions. However, little exists in terms of harmonising teacher education for birth to 4.

The qualifications of the workforce is also problematic. The workforce is made up of largely un- and - underqualified black females. Morrow (2007:28) in his response to the challenges in South African education maintains that the "remedy is going to have to be professional". This is particularly true for ECCE where professionalisation of the workforce was a non-issue up until recently. Working with young children is complex, dynamic and challenging and makes demands on a variety of professional roles (Institute of Medicine and National Research Council 2015). It includes paying attention to curbing risk and building protective factors in early childhood. Richter et al (2012) together with Berry et al. (2013) draw attention to how poverty, high infant mortality rates, malnutrition and anti-social behaviour lead to risky early childhood development.

Bearing the above in mind, it is timely and critical to develop a programme framework for ECCE Intial Teacher Education (ITE) as an umbrella document to guide the process of designing appropriate teacher education programmes for birth to 4 and other initiatives for an emerging field. This framework is inspired by the need to:

- engage with and implement the *Policy on Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for ECD Educators* (PMRP) (2017).
- harmonise a fragmentary field and build a common vision and shared understandings to guide the professionalisation of the ECCE workforce.
- collaborate with different ECCE stakeholders in the Project for Inclusive Early Childhood Care and Education (PIECCE) and beyond for design of programmes.
- contribute to making birth to 4 teacher education an arena of scholarly and professional focus.

1.2 Project for Inclusive Early Childhood Care and Education (PIECCE)

This programme framework emanates from PIECCE which is a multi-stakeholder project dedicated to developing teacher education for birth to 4. The project is funded by the European Union (EU) and university participation is supported by the Department of Higher Education (DHET).

The *overall objective* is to:

> Contribute towards the professionalisation of the ECCE sector by increasing access to quality birth to 4 programmes in higher education institutions.

The *specific objective* is to:

> Develop a standardised programme framework for the ECCE Diploma and Bachelor of Education at Level 6 & 7

There are 3 drivers in PIECCE, namely, quality, collaboration and inclusivity. These drivers are cross-cutting and informs the work of the entire project. Within PIECCE professionalism embraces the following:

- foregrounding principles of inclusive education
- emphasising the centrality and uniqueness of the learner
- preparing a critically reflective workforce
- fostering an understanding of contextual and situational realities to respect diversity
- building communities of practice for ECCE teacher education and practice

PIECCE has three outputs, namely:

- Output 1:
  A collaborative process model for programme development
- Output 2:
  A research review of fitness for purpose of a representative selection of existing ECD and related capacity-building programmes
- Output 3:
  A standardised programme framework and set of support materials

The partners in PIECCE are as follows:

PIECCE is implemented by a consortium led by UNISA under the supervision of the Department of Higher Education and Training. The consortium partners include the Centre for Social Development (CSD) Rhodes, BRIDGE, Saide, TREE, Ntataise and False Bay College
The other universities are:

1. University of Pretoria
2. Witwatersrand University
3. University of Fort Hare
4. University of Free State
5. University of KwaZulu-Natal
6. Walter Sisulu University
7. Cape Peninsula University of Technology
8. North West University

1.3 The research evidence from PIECCE which informs the programme framework

Ouput 2 in PIECCE was dedicated to becoming familiar with contextual issues of ECCE teacher education for birth to 4 in SA through research (Harrison 2017). A mixed method study was conducted using a multi-stakeholder team. Data was produced through literature reviews and 3 national surveys at 14 institutions in 6 provinces . The study concentrated on 4 topics, namely, academic support, work-integrated learning, record of prior knowledge, and knowledge and practice standards. The findings showed the following:

- There are different types of teacher training organisations and that there is a wide variety of qualifications in ECD offered by TVETS, NPOs and HEIs, with a shift from the traditional NQF ECD Level 5 from the NPO/TVET sector, to some HEIs.
- All institution types acknowledged the need for academic support, with an emphasis on mentorship at multiple levels. Mentorship is given in diverse ways ranging from teacher educators providing individual attention, to peer mentorship, to mentor teachers.
- A community of practice (CoP) approach is advocated for the development of professional learning communities where there are possibilities for reflection, mentoring and coaching.
- The concept of reflective practice was considered as an essential aspect of learning for student/practitioners and for teacher educators themselves. An analysis of a quality tool kit that focused on reflective practice showed that teachers found it to be beneficial but seemed reluctant to apply it when there was no mentor present to guide the process.
- The importance of an adaptive approach to context emerged in the WIL component of the study. There was consensus that context is a key component of transformative pedagogy and that students/practitioners must be given the opportunity to work in a variety of contexts but most importantly should be equipped with the skills to be flexible and sensitive to these contexts.
- An examination of the policies that drive ECCE showed that a competency approach to teacher development is a potential way forward. Ten competencies from the PMRP

(2017) were isolated and considered to shape what ECCE educators should know and be able to do.

- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) appears to have minimal uptake within HEIs. There is evidence that RPL is gaining traction in the NPO sector, but it is generally not sufficiently supported by training institutions because it is time consuming and costly when working with large cohorts. Given the present trend toward acknowledging that many in the ECCE workforce have considerable experience in the field, but not necessarily supported by formal qualifications, the suggestion is that RPL be considered as a priority area for access.
- There is a collaborative commitment to addressing diversity in training, but this is primarily being done in a non-integrated manner with particular emphasis in specific modules. Understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion needs more focus since these are critical drivers that complexify practice in the ECCE field.
- Quality professional development must provide academic support, mentorship at multiple levels, opportunities for reflective practice, engagement with diversity in order to produce adaptive, flexible educators who are able to be pedagogic leaders in their field while acquiring a suite of competencies.

The findings of this study, together with deliberations in the PIECCE meetings contributed towards vision building for ECCE teacher education and the themes for the development of the chapters in the programme framework.

1.4 Purpose, vision and mission of the ECCE programme framework for ITE

- The *main purpose* of this programme framework is to provide guidelines to assist with the development of ECCE qualifications in ITE.
- The *vision* is to build a society where ECCE professionals are developed to reach their full potential for acting in the best interest of all young children.
- The *mission* is to prepare ECCE professionals who are equipped with the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions to effect quality ECCE practice in diverse contexts.

1.5 Target audience

This programme framework is aimed the following categories of people who have a vested interest in birth to four teacher education:

- Programme developers
- Curriculum designers and co-ordinators
- Managers
- Policy makers
- Quality assurers
- Teacher educators
- Academics
- Researchers
- Student teachers
- Members of professions with interest in early childhood

1.6 Themes and structure

In order to engage with the different facets of ECCE programmes for ITE leading up to qualifications the programme framework addresses the following:

- Context and principles
- Knowledge and practice standards
- Africanisation, indigenous knowledge and belonging
- Developmental education
- Pedagogy
- Assessment
- Work integrated learning
- Modes of engagement
- Recognition of prior learning

Each of these themes form the chapters in the programme framework. They include but not limited to the following:

- Introduction
- Purpose

- Concepts, issues and debates
- Guidelines for programme development

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CHAPTER 2

THE SOUTH AFRICAN ECCE CONTEXT AND PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHER EUCATION PROGRAMMES

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2.1 Introduction

The early childhood teacher education system must be considered in the light of mounting evidence calling for government support for the early years. In SA there is an urgent need to intervene in the lives of young children to ensure optimal development and that young children have the best possible start in life. The complexity of appropriate interventions is linked to expectations of educators. Taking into account, that ITE is the entry point to professionalism, it is imperative to pay attention to the capacity of educators to facilitate ECCE that is responsive to SA realities. This is particularly important, given the link between training of educators and the crisis in education as noted in schooling in SA (Osman, 2010; Reeves & Robinson, 2014; Taylor, Van der Berg & Mabogoane, 2013).

The provision of quality entry-level programmes is viewed as foundational to addressing the crisis. The PMRP *(*2017) calls for producing knowledgeable as opposed to technical ECCE educators. Inquiry, reflection and responsiveness should be forthcoming. For this to happen, entry-level teacher education needs to go beyond superficial content knowledge and decontextualised ECCE practice tips. In order to forge ahead with appropriate ECCE teacher education programmes in SA, it is important to gain deeper insight into the context that warrants action through teacher education. This provides a platform for action to be guided by broad principles.

2.2 Purpose

This chapter presents the key contextual issues that warrant attention in ITE for ECCE. Taking into account the need for collective action in the field, the broad guiding principles are tabled in action-oriented ways.

2.3 Key contextual Issues

There are 5 identifiable issues that provide an understanding for action in the development of professionals in ECCE, namely, vulnerable early childhoods, low status of women in the workforce, poor retention, questionable teacher quality and fragmentation of the field. Each of these issues creates challenges for ECCE teacher education at entry levels.

2.3.1 *Vulnerable early childhoods*

The situational realities of children in early childhood in SA affects their growth, development and learning. There are varied childhood experiences that shape the nature of ECCE work. Whilst some children live in enabling environments that contribute to their optimal development there are many whose development is compromised. There are 6 311 000 children under six in South Africa (South African ECD Review 2016). Geographical location and socio-economic conditions impacts negatively on children's lives. In the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga more than 60% of children under six live in rural areas. Four million children under six live in the poorest 40% households. Children are left in the care of grandparents, relatives and neighbours as their mothers seek employment. There is child poverty but this has decreased since the introduction of the child support grant. The living conditions brings a constellation of risk. Poor infrastructure and access to basic amenities results in poor hygiene, which contributes towards disease and infections. This state of affairs calls for ECCE educators to be responsive to the context of vulnerability. ECCE educators should be knowledgeable about the needs and capabilities of children in early childhood. Special attention should be given to children in the disadvantaged contexts and those with special needs.

2.3.2 *Women's work with little or no pay*

ECCE is naturally taken to be women's work. As such, it has been regarded as unpaid labour where there is an expectation that work will be done as part of a moral orientation towards values of love, commitment and interdependence (William 2010). Volunteerism is still viewed as an entry point to paid labour in ECCE in SA. This response is more likely for those working in non-centre based settings in poor rural locations (Biersteker 2007). ECCE educators need to be developed in their professional roles, responsibilities and mindsets to embrace the challenges of care and education work in an emerging professionalisation system.

2.3.3 *Unstable workforce – low retention*

The unstable workforce has resulted from the lack of a government-led ECCE system and specifically a human resource strategy for the early years. Whilst this being addressed under the human resource strategy in the *National Integrated ECD Policy* (2015) it is still to be fully implemented. Working in the early years sector below Grade R is a poorly paid job (Ebrahim 2010). In SA, like in other low and middle income countries, the status, pay, and benefits for the ECCE workforce are poorer than those of primary teachers and this can lead to low job satisfaction and retention rates (UNESCO 2015). Whilst centres receive subsidies they also charge fees and poor parents are unable to meet the financial demands made on them. Poor job security and conditions of service (ETDP SETA 2012) serve as reasons to leave the sector. Where support was provided through learnerships there were unintended consequences. Biesteker (2008) draws attention to how practitioners who received financial support for training were dissatisfied with what they received once the training was completed. They therefore left the sector, sought other learnerships or made their way towards Grade R, which is more established. The impact of HIV/Aids and natural attrition also contributes to the instability in the workforce.

Both the conditions of service and the poor qualifications of the ECCE workforce draws attention to building knowledgeable and skillful professional in a very volatile job market. Hence, the need to factor the basic knowledge and skills for prospective students who will take the entrepreneurship route, as well practitioners who will be required to support learning and play

the role of managers. Leadership, management, administration and knowledge of policies and legislations are important.

2.3.4 *Teacher quality*

Quality is a relative concept. Recently there is some agreement that at a minimum we should be able to see something making a difference in the lives of young children and their families. Research has shown that quality is a more consistent predictor of children's growth, development and learning, than race, socio-economic status, parental education (Darling-Hammond, 1999). Improvement of access and quality is linked to the development of competent, well-trained and well-supported educators (UNESCO 2015). In SA the knowledge and practice competencies and qualifications of the workforce is a cause for concern.

The Western Cape Department of Social Development (Human Science Research Council & Early Learning Resource Unit 2010) conducted an audit of the quality of service in centre-based provision for pre-grade R children. Findings showed that activities provided for babies and toddlers were of low quality. Early identification of children with special needs was problematic. Training was limited but valued when offered. The National Audit of 19 971 ECD centres across the 9 provinces found that qualifications were poor (Department of Social Development & Economic Policy Research Unit 2014). Only 30% of practitioners had ECD certificates on any level and diplomas and degrees were rare. Fifty five percent of the practitioners had no formal qualifications. There is evidence in low and middle income countries to show that both the programme quality and child outcomes can be attributed to input from teachers who are better educated and trained (Engle et al., 2011; Behrman et al., 2013; Rao et al., 2014). For this to happen in substantive ways the support in ITE as well as continuing professional development has to be strengthened.

2.3.5 *A fragmentary field of training*

There are 8 categories of ECCE workers identified in the National Integrated ECD Policy (Department of Social Development & UNICEF 2015). The training resides with the health care sector, other social service professions and the education sector. Each has their own regulating and quality assurance bodies. Most ECCE training for below Grade R seems to reside with the NGOs. Biersteker (2007) and later Biersteker and Picken's (2013) review of NGO programmes show that qualifications range from skills courses with certificates to diplomas. There are overlaps between different sectors and their offerings but this arena has not been fully exploited. There is an urgent need to harmonise the training of the ECCE workforce. The NGOs, TVETS and HEIs need to share a common vision and common knowledge and practice standards to guide the preparation of a quality workforce who can make a difference to the lives of children and their families.

2.4 Principles

In light of the fragmentation of the ECCE field together with the concerns for quality programmes, there is a need for broad principles to guide ITE. The way in which principles find expression in programmes leading up to ECCE qualifications is dependent on the nature and context of institutions. The principles are helpful in promoting shared goals for the development of high quality educators for the early years. The SA ECCE teacher education programmes must enact the following principles, which are tabled in action-oriented ways:

- Encouraging transformative and lifelong learning through reflection and inquiry.
- Envisioning the educator as a ***critically reflective professional*** and then equipping them with a variety of knowledges, skills and professional dispositions to act in the best interest of young children and their families in context.
- Building responsiveness to young children and the settings in which they find themselves.
- Promoting diversity, equity and inclusion as key elements to respecting the rights of all children.

- Enable understanding of holistic development of young children and the nature of their learning (culturally, developmentally and linguistically).
- Ensuring the development of a knowledge mix, which builds sound knowledge, perspectives and pedagogical expertise.
- Affording opportunities to engage with and enact inclusive curricula and pedagogies.
- Forging partnerships between teacher education institutions and early childhood settings in order to bridge the divide between theory and practice.
- Providing opportunities to collaborate with site-based staff to develop effective practices with young children and for them.
- Promoting a research disposition through exposure to a variety of knowledges and skills for problematising and investigating practice.
- Supporting innovation to improve how educators are prepared for contextually responsive practice.

2.5 Guidelines for using contextual issues and principles for programme development

- Quality, inclusivity and collaboration as noted in PIECCE function as principles. These must be embedded in the curriculum and more broadly teacher education programmes for the early years.
- ECCE educators should to be trained in ways that they are able to address the needs of young children in all contexts. Due attention should be being given to practice with children in the disadvantaged contexts and those with special needs.
- Programmes must take into account the professional roles, responsibilities and mindsets to work in a variety of ECCE contexts. This can be approached through affording student teachers opportunities to engage with the self-in-context and to make reflective practice part of the natural repertoire for learning how to be a professional.
- The curriculum must take into consideration the need for a highly specialised workforce not only in ECCE practice but also in the management of ECCE centres as many in the workforces will be required to play dual roles.

- All efforts in programme development should be informed by wide stakeholder collaboration for ECCE teacher education.
- Broad principles aimed at effective teacher education must be used to promote the goal of developing a high quality workforce for the early years.

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CHAPTER 3

KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE STANDARDS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

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3.1 Introduction

Internationally, the demands to increase quality provision in early childhood development is leading to a growing emphasis on teacher education. Additionally, there is general agreement amongst researchers, policy makers and early childhood practitioners that the "quality of early childhood services and ultimately the outcomes for children and their families depends on a well-educated, experienced and competent staff" (Urban, 2012: 7). However, what exactly constitutes teacher competencies in early childhood teacher education? What should competent teachers know and be able to do in a highly complex and demanding field?

ECD policies and legislation provides messages for action. The interlinked messages stress the importance of being responsive to context, gaining advantage from policies and exploring the potential of standards to unite a fragmentary field. The PMRP (Department of Higher Education and Training 2017) uses a competency-based model for ECCE teacher education. This model works from the fundamental premise that it is necessary to define ***what educators should be able to know and do***. Student teachers have to demonstrate the knowledge and practice competencies through the learning opportunities in the ECCE programmes and then effect these as professionals once they graduate. The competencies provide benchmarks of what the minimum levels of achievement in various aspects of practice should be. The competencies when packaged as knowledge and practice standards are helpful in designing quality, teacher education experiences.

In the PMRP (Department of Higher Education and Training 2017), the basic competencies for professionally qualifications are listed in Appendix 1. There are also indications of competencies in other parts of the document such as the knowledge mix. There needs to be better organisation of the competencies for it to function as knowledge and practice standards that can inform processes such as

programme design, curriculum, monitoring and evaluation. If thoughtfully designed then the knowledge and practice standards can be used not only for ITE but also be expanded for continuing teacher education.

3.2 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to package the competencies tabled in the PMRP (Department of Higher Education and Training 2017) as knowledge and practice standards so that they can inform programmes leading to qualifications in ECCE amongst other things.

3.3 Issues and debates

Recently, in rich countries, there has been a move to standardise all knowledge and practice standards for teachers from early childhood to basic education. In low and middle-income countries, however, the professional competencies and guidelines are less forthcoming but this is changing (UNESCO 2015). One of the reason for the slow uptake is that there is not enough evidence on the level, content and organisation of teacher training and professional development to pass judgement on what is most effective for improving quality. Additionally, many changes are attempted at the same time and it is difficult to ascertain which aspects make a difference to quality ECCE.

For ECCE practice in South Africa, the National Early Learning Standards (NELDS) specifies what children at different ages should be able to know and do. It is unclear to what extent the NELDS was used as framings for the development of core competencies for ECCE educators. The National Curriculum Framework for birth to four still needs to be unpacked in order to ascertain its key messages for ECCE teacher education. Thus far, in ECCE an example of drawing on knowledge and practice standards is evident in qualifications accredited by the ETDP SETA. For example, the Further Education and Training Certificate for Early Childhood Development (ECD), which is an entry-level qualification previously made use of unit standard informed by international comparability.

3.3.1 *Top-down knowledge and practice standards*

With regard to qualifications offered by HEIs, the core knowledge and practices standards have not been comprehensively outlined in policy documents. Sayed et al (2016) draw attention to how the *Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ)* policy (Department of Higher Education and Training 2011) aimed at ECCE (Foundation Phase), does not provide details on pedagogies, theories and structures that providers need to be adhering too. This approach has been taken to avoid a government-imposed regulatory framework. Where this approach is strong then there could be the risk of promoting one particular view of teaching and what it means to be a teacher (Sachs 2003). To obviate this, it is expected that the specialist field would collaborate to develop a shared framework to inform programme development. In the Foundation Phase this has been problematic as there is no significant community of practice guiding this type of work. Of late, however, there has been some development for languages and mathematics. Additionally, there is institutional competitiveness and this hampers collaborative endeavours for programme development. For ECCE, PIECCE was designed to promote collaboration amongst different stakeholders to develop shared goals and responses for qualification development.

3.3.2 *The value of minimum standards and knowledge and practice standards that is developed and overseen by the ECCE profession*

It is important to strengthen and expand the minimum standards outlined in the PMRP (Department of Higher Education 2017). There is value on several fronts with achievements. Minimum standards for practice can guarantee the health and safety of children in ECEC environments. They can ensure the conditions of learning and care by defining duration, staff qualification levels and curriculum to shape staff behaviour (Burchinal et al., 2009; OECD, 2001). National regulatory frameworks with appropriate minimum standards can better "level the playing field" by ensuring that all children benefit from a minimum quality of education and care (Belsky, 2011; Eurydice, 2009; Vandenbroeck, 2011). Raising standards or setting minimum standards can help reduce knowledge gaps for all, although the effect is greater for low-income, immigrant and minority children (OECD, 2006 & 2011).

For minimum standards to be relevant in teacher education it must have input from the ECCE field and be owned and overseen by the profession. The defining of knowledge and practices for ECCE standards must be done by a community of practice made up of a variety of providers from the profession. It should be used flexibly and adapted to address contextual realities together with concerns for career pathways. This is important so that the uniqueness of the ECCE profession is acknowledged and a one-size-fits all

approach is avoided. A fragmentary ECCE teacher education system is in need of a shared vision and shared understanding that unites the field. PIECCE can be seen as a vehicle to enable this process.

There needs to be acknowledgement that student teachers must be able to perform in a variety of contexts. The outlining of the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions can guide the building of foundations for a strong workforce. What must be avoided at all costs is the use of middle class urban norms to define the knowledge and practice standards. Attention must be given to situated and value-laden definitions of quality if there is to be sensitivity to the variety of ways in which knowledge and practice competencies can be looked at.

The response above is valuable. ECCE educators can begin to identify themselves not just through Diploma and Degree qualifications but through knowledge and practice competencies that are gained through participating in the learning opportunities offered in the qualifications. To function like this, professional learning opportunities must be well-thought through to help student teachers embrace new cultures, new thinking and related actions. The goal should be the use of the knowledge and practice standards as a basis for curriculum development, approval of programmes by the Department of Higher Education (DHET) and the Council for Higher Education (CHE), evaluations by teacher educators and awarding of degrees.

3.3.2 *The SA core competencies for ECCE professionals*

In order to gain a fuller picture of the competencies for ECCE professions in SA, a brief analysis was conducted using entry level qualifications, namely, the *Occupational Certificate: Early Childhood Development*, the *Further Education and Training Certificate: Early Childhood Development* and the PMRP (Department of Higher Education and Training 2017). The first two qualifications aimed at developing practitioners for centre and non-centred-based provision. The occupational qualification has an explicit focus on supporting practitioners dealing with conception to school going age. The FETC Level 4 certificate is aimed at practitioners who are in ECCE settings but have no formal qualifications. Both these qualifications offer basic knowledge and practical competencies. The FETC Level 4 pays attention to communication and the basic mathematics requirements for building practitioners academic competence. The PMRP (Department of Higher Education and Training 2017) is a step up. It is aimed at developing educators who will be able to deliver structured ECCE programmes which include but is not limited to the implementation of formal ECCE curriculum frameworks .

When the *Occupational Certificate for ECD* and the *Further Education and Training Certificate for ECD* were compared with competencies in the PMRP (Department of Higher Education and Training 2017) it was possible to identify some common competencies. Ten competencies were identified. International core competencies for ECCE educators were also studied for comparability. There were some absences in the entry level qualifications. For example, the content knowledge does not feature, the ethics of working with young children is absent and there is a limited response to context responsiveness although mention is made of diversity and inclusivity. Parity at levels of qualifications is also an issue of concern. This fragmentation could be addressed through a standard-based response to competencies.

The 10 core competencies listed below are embedded in the PMRP (Department of Higher Education 2017) and some of them are alluded to in other ECCE entry level qualifications such as the Level 4 qualifications. They show some alignment to international standards e.g. the National Association for the Education of the Young Child, Teacher Standards in the UK and some NGO programmes in low and middle income countries.

Table 3.1: Knowledge and practice standards

	Knowledge and practice standards - 10 Core Competencies found in SA ECCE qualifications and the PMRP (Department of Higher Education and Training 2017)
1.	Becoming a professional by paying attention to mindset, roles and responsibilities
2.	Understanding and promoting child development and learning in different contexts
3.	Building family and community relationships
4.	Ensuring effective health, safety and nutrition practices
5.	Creating effective learning environments including managing behaviour
6.	Planning and facilitating learning through play and other transformative pedagogies in appropriate ways (developmentally, culturally linguistically)
7.	Using curriculum and relevant content knowledge to build meaningful learning opportunities (6 Early Learning and Development Areas (ELDAs) in NCF)
8.	Observing, documenting and assessing to support young children's development and learning
9.	Understanding and addressing diversity, inclusion and equity to act in the best interest of all children
10.	Showing basic leadership, management and administration skills

*The relationships of the 10 competencies with the knowledge mix in the PMRP (*Department of Higher Education and Training 2017)

The 10 competencies are linked to the knowledge mix in the PLMRP (Department of Higher Education and Training 2017). The table that follows shows the link to the knowledge mix.

Table 3.2: An example of the link between knowledge and practice standards and the knowledge mix

Knowledge and practice standards and the knowledge mix	**Knowledge Mix**					
	FL	**EL**	**DL**	**PL**	**SL**	**PR L**
Becoming a profession by paying attention to mindset , roles and responsibilities	**X**	**X**			**X**	**x**
Understanding and promoting child development and learning in different contexts			X			
Building family and community relationships			**X**		**X**	
Ensuring effective health, safety and nutrition practices			X		**X**	**x**
Creating effective care and learning environments including managing behaviour				X		**x**
Planning and facilitating care and learning through play and other transformative pedagogies in appropriate ways (developmentally, culturally, linguistically)				X		**x**
Using curriculum and relevant content knowledge to build meaningful learning (e.g.6 Early Learning Areas (ELDAs) in NCF)			**x**	x		**X**
Observing, documenting and assessing to support young children's development and learning			X	**X**		**X**
Having knowledge and addressing diversity, inclusion and equity to include all children			X	**X**	**X**	
Showing basic leadership, management and administration skills			X	**X**		

3.3.3 *Organising knowledge and practice standards*

The 10 competencies fall under 3 broad themes presented in Figure 3.1. The themes are overlapping and interrelated.

- *Professional Knowledge (Knowing)*

  Different types of knowledges are needed in order to help students to be responsive to children's need and interests in different contexts and in an inclusive way. This knowledge needs to be linked to practice for a strong theory-practice relationship.

- *Professional Practice (Doing)*

  Student teachers need to draw on the professional knowledge and apply this in practice. The knowledge must be relevant to afford student teachers the tools they need to make practice contextually responsive and inclusive. For the SA context they should be equipped with a variety of strategies, methodologies and techniques to effect quality care and education experiences for children. There should be opportunities to learn *in*, *from* and *about* practices.

- *Professional mindset, roles and responsibilities*

  Student teachers must take seriously the fact that they are developing as members of an ECCE profession. The model of teacher education is important to consider. The shaping of mindsets as critically reflective educators is imperative in order to prevent the rise of technical educators who privilege outcomes without taking into account the contextual needs and interests of individual children as unique being. It is also important to promote the actions of an ethical educator who understands and effects the ethical protocols and other guidelines for working with young children.

Figure 3.1: Three themes informing the professional competencies

Figure 3.2: Three themes around which the knowledge and practice standards are organised

Professional Knowledge (Knowing)

Knowledge of child development and learning in different contexts that characterises young children's lives

- **Knoweldge of** diversity , inclusive education and barriers to learning and development
- **Knowledge of** health,safety, nutrition
- **Knowledge of** learning enviornments in a variety of ECD conttexts
- **Knowledge of** the approved curriculum and related content knowledge and concepts to build a meaningful and contexually responsive learning opportunities (e.g. communication and language development and exploring mathematics – ELDAs in NCF)
- **Knowledge of** planning and facilitating early learning that is developmentally, culturally and linguistically approriate - Knowledge of play and other transformative pedagogies
- **Knowledge of** relationships and ineractions with young children
- **Knowledge of** observing and assessing young children
- **Knowldege of** parents, families and community and how to work in partnerships
- **Knowledge of** basic leadership, management and administrative skills

Professional Practice (Doing)

Ability to address children's development and learning in context and in appropriate ways.

- **Ability to** adapt planning and faciliation strategies to address inclusion and equity
- **Ability to** promote and effective health, safety and nutrition practices
- **Ability to** create effective learning environments (physical space, resources/materials, activities, classroom management as well as emotional climate)
- **Ability to** manage children's behaviour
- **Ability to** use the approved curriculum to plan and facilitate early learning in developmentatlly, culturally and linguistically appropriate ways - using play and other transformative pedagogies
- **Ability to** use relationships and interactions to advance chidlren's development and learning
- **Ability t**o observe, document, assess children to support their learning
- **Ability to** building family and community relationships
- **Ability to** show basic leadership, management and administrative skills

Professional mindset, role and responsiblities

Becoming a professional

- Begins engaging as a critically reflective practitioner and as an advocate for children's rights
- Demonstrates ethical practice with children and fellow colleagues.
- Participates in learning opportunties with peers
- Demonstrates an understanding of policies, regulations for ECCE settings
- Uses technology for own learning and to facilitate chidlren's learning
- Builds competence in multilingualism

3.4 Guidelines for programme development

- The knowledge and practice standards should become the key driver to inform the qualification development for the Diploma and Degree in ECCE. It is a unifier in the sense that it brings together a fragmentary HEI ECCE field to afford commonality of qualification experience and possibilities of portability of credits for students.
- The Community of Practice for ECCE did unpack each knowledge and practice standards and possibilities for integration for the Diploma and Degree. This is important to consider for the National ECCE Qualifications Development.
- Whilst the aim is commonality, there are bound to be contextual differences e.g. with regard to language offerings and choices related to student support taking into account different modes of engagement. This must be considered when working with the knowledge and practice standards.
- The knowledge and practice standards can also be used for greater synergy between the theoretical modules and WIL. Greater discussions are required on WIL standards to guide ECCE practice. This is somewhat addressed in Chapter 8 on WIL.
- There needs to be greater dialogue on how the SACE professional standards are related to ECCE knowledge and practice standards.

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CHAPTER 4

AFRICANISATION, INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS AND BELONGING IN ECCE TEACHER EDUCATION

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4.1 Introduction

The PMRP (Department of Higher Education 2017) is leading to new dialogue on the knowledge base that ECCE teachers should be exposed to. One of the issues at stake relates to what vehicles should be the "primary and principle communicator of the African experience" (Ramose 1998: iv). This is not to say the there is one type of African experience but many that characterises the lives of people and their families in Africa.

Education is a significant step towards empowering people to participate more fully in their communities. As a fundamental human right it can be used as a tool to protect, preserve and develop traditional indigenous skills and cultures. It is an indispensable asset to attain freedom and social justice (Champagne & Duane 2009*).* These current debates in SA calls for the inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) in the ECCE curriculum. This can be read in the context of aligning young children's experiences to their sociocultural worldviews and groundings (Department of Basic Education 2015: 2). Research literature and policies, convey a clear message that local, indigenous and traditional knowledge must uphold children's rights and allow all children to be curious about the world, energetic as they explore their world safely (ibid). Mosimege and Onwu (2004:2) articulate that indigenous knowledge happens to be all-inclusive knowledge that shields practices, technologies and the way of life that have been and are still used by humans for existence in a variety of environments. The traditional and local knowledge systems are dynamic expressions of perceiving and understanding our world. The decolonising knowledge through the inclusion of indigenous knowledge perspectives in school and in higher

institutions of learning as a curriculum is a global movement (Agrawal 1995; Dei 2008; Heber 2008).

The ECCE teacher education qualifications requires in-depth specialisation of knowledge, as well as practical skills and experience required in an ECCE context (DoBE 2017). The democratisation and decolonisation of the ECCE knowledge space means that due attention should be paid to worldviews and related knowledge systems that ECCE educators are exposed to.

4.2 The purpose of this chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to shed light on Africanisation, IKS and belonging with the view to using its perspectives to shape a more relevant ECCE teacher education for SA.

4.3 Africanisation, IKS and belonging and implications for ECCE teacher education

To Africanise means to value and to validate African ways of knowing and African ways of being. African traditions promote informal and relaxed way of living and multiple expressions such as singing, dancing, laughing, painting, and sculpturing. Many Africans regard this happier style of living as unique and peculiar to Africa. Essentially, Africanising the curriculum happens to be a call for African countries to reflect their own cultures, identities, languages, and histories in their curricular (Obanya, 2005; Moalosi, 2007). The ECCE qualification requires in-depth specialisation of knowledge, as well as practical skills and experience required in an ECCE context (DoBE, 2017) hence IKS has a valued responsibility in the education system as well as to have an input in the creation of opportunities for the learners in offering the South African a voice in their children' education. The policy in ECCE is supportive of a contextual response to teacher education (DoBE, 2017). IKS is one way of contributing to humanising the western knowledge systems and will be a major contributor to cognitive justice of young learners. Historically, accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills are essential for household individual functioning and well-being (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). Africanising education will capacitate ECCE teachers with

knowledge of science to compensate for centuries of marginalisation and devaluation (Abah, Mashebe, & Denuga, 2015).

Another key issue to consider is the concept of Ubuntu, an Nguni word from South Africa, which addresses interconnectedness, common humanity, and the responsibility to each other that flows from connection (Nussbaum, 2003: 21). Ubuntu appears to be more of a collective responsibility than an individual worldview. It is quite important that the perspective of Ubuntu represents a wider worldview or belief system rather than just a set of discernible characteristics.

Education in all African countries was embedded in the culture of the Other as is the case today in many African societies (O'Donoghue, Lotz-Sisitka, Asafo-Adjei, Kota & Hanisi, 2007). The foundation curriculum must be made responsive to IKS in order to enable cultural survival, environmental responsibility and sustainable development (Emeagwali, 2003). Teaching IKS as a foundation subject in initial teacher education has revealed positive and challenging outcomes (Hart & Moore, 2005). For some student teachers the prospect to understand IKS has brought about cultural awareness. When student teachers are exposed to a variety of knowledge bases in child development and are challenged to be critically reflective they then are able to make connections and also experience a sense of belonging if their ways of knowing and being forms part of the knowledge mix in their training.

4.4. Kinds of knowledge to be included in the curriculum

Wyk and Higgs (2004) argue that the only way an African child can be able to solve or respond to African philosophy is by knowing their culture that is infused in the IKS. Curriculum as a concept can be broken down into 3 key components: intended curriculum, implemented curriculum and attained curriculum. The intended curriculum typically includes the guiding documents produced by the Ministry of Education or other education authorities which dictate how much, how often and what should be content areas and learning goals. The implemented curriculum is what actually happens in the classroom, how effectively educators support early learing. Finally, the attained curriculum is what children actually learn. Therefore permitting a curriculum that values IKS would allow African children to be redirected and reflect in their own language, culture,

identity and history (Moalosi, 2007 & Gaotlhobongwe, 2012). It must be remembered that worldview shapes consciousness and forms and forms the theoretical frameworks within which knowledge is sought, critiqued or and understood (Sarpong, 2002). ECCE student teachers must be exposed to a varied of worldviews and opportunities to examine their own beliefs and working theories on young children and practice for them.

In early childhood children need to be exposed to IKS in order to be "socialised" into their cultural practices which in SA is valued as a national asset. This must be read in the light of rejection of IKS. "Schooling has been explicitly and implicitly a site of rejection of indigenous knowledge and language, it has been used as a means of assimilating and integrating indigenous peoples into a 'national' society and identity at the cost of their indigenous identity and social practices "(Jacob, Liu, & Lee, 2005).

4.5 African languages

Koch and Burkett (2005) argue that the institutions of Higher Education in South Africa choose English as the most predominant medium of instruction for teaching and learning despite the fact that this is the second and sometimes the third language of most of the students on this continent. Transitioning students on bilingual education aims to move them from the home language to the dominant language, which is usually English. Recent policies in teacher education, however, are making it compulsory for students to build competence in the indigenous languages. Students have the opportunity of choosing different African language combinations to build their competence in home languages and additional languages. This is complex and challenging for higher education. Creative solutions need to be forthcoming to address the needs of supporting early learning through mother tongue instruction.

4.6 Guidelines for programme development

- Decolonisation of knowledge, Africanisation and IKS must be given prominence when considering the knowledge base that ECCE educators should be exposed to. This is important for bringing

marginalised knowledge to the fore and to inculcate a sense of belonging. The ECCE curriculum for teacher education needs a rethink on the knowledge base it uses to train professionals. IKS has been marginalised and this should be given its rightful place in the curriculum.

- There should be ample opportunities for choice combinations in African languages to support mother tongue instruction in the early years. This also raises questions about the competence of teacher educators in the African languages and supervisory support during WIL.
- In order to touch base with families and communities, their care and educational practices, there should be consideration of service learning components as part of the WIL or as assignments to help ECCE student teachers to be more in touch with the realities of children and their families.

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CHAPTER 5

DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION – AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO ACADEMIC SUPPORT

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5.1 Introduction

Access and success are two important goals in any quality education. In SA one way of facilitating access to the NQF Level 6 Diploma and Level 7 Degree in ECCE is by aligning these qualifications as closely as possible with the existing and/or revised Level 4 and Level 5 ECD qualification/s in the occupational and vocational sector. This includes aligning the Foundational Learning and Academic Skills components of the qualifications more closely. But even once students have access, we need to pay attention to how we support them to succeed. There are many ways in which we need to provide student support, but an important way is by providing academic support.

The Institute of Training and Education for Capacity-building (ITEC, 2017) has noted that ECD practitioners who have the equivalent of at least Grade 11 (Standard 9 or Level 3) in communication and mathematical literacy usually struggle with the reading and writing required to learn effectively at Level 4. Spaull (2013:7) reports that "*Irrespective of which subject or grade one chooses to test, most South African children are performing significantly below the curriculum, often failing to acquire functional numeracy and literacy skills. Apart from the 25 per cent of schools that are mostly functional, South African schools as they currently stand do not, and arguably cannot, impart to pupils the foundational knowledge and skills they should be acquiring at school*." It is therefore possible to suggest that even Grade 12 graduates, as well as ECD practitioners with level 4 legacy / occupational qualifications or a level 5 certificate / diploma wanting to further their education, may lack certain foundational skills, conceptual knowledge, language development, critical thinking skills, life skills and academic skills necessary to support

their further study towards level 6 and 7 qualifications. “Higher education is suffering an *articulation gap*, defined as a mismatch or discontinuity between the learning requirements of higher education programmes and the actual knowledge and competencies of first-time entering students. In other words, there is a mismatch between the statutory minimum requirements for admission to higher education and the level of academic preparedness that is needed for succeeding in conventional higher education programmes” (Fisher, 2011). Bearing this in mind, Torr (cited in Boughhey, 2010) notes that academic support was ‘developed to assist students without the necessary background to be able to benefit immediately from lectures and tutorials’.

5.2 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the concept of developmental education as an alternative way of thinking about ‘academic support’. The main argument is that developmental education favours an integrated approach. This chapter identifies some issues that need careful thought and offers some guidelines for implementing developmental education.

5.3 Concepts, Issues and Debates

5.3.1 *Defining Developmental Education*

The glossary of education states that” the term *academic support* may refer to a wide variety of instructional methods, educational services, or school resources provided to students in the effort to help them accelerate their learning progress, catch up with their peers, meet learning standards, or generally succeed.” (Harrison, 2017:31). There is however often a negative stigma attached to academic support, with students labelled as ‘at risk’, or at a disadvantage. There is an assumption that ‘disadvantage’ can be addressed independently of mainstream learning (Boughhey, 2010) and that academic support can largely be given as a separate or isolated programme. This makes it difficult for students to marry what they learn in academic support with their course as a whole. Therefore, it is suggested that an integrated response that allows for strong mentorship would be more effective and would build students’ confidence.” (Harrison, 2017: 31).

The concept developmental education examines the way in which structures such as curriculum, language, literacy and pedagogy intersect with race and social class in order to produce inequity. It thus sees 'disadvantage' or 'unpreparedness' more holistically and directs attention not just to the qualification but to the institution (system, pedagogy and curriculum, etc.) as a whole.

Developmental education "understands academic life as a form of social practice to which some had more access than others because of previous social and cultural experiences, and acknowledges that access to academic practice is only developed over time, through engagement with learning in the disciplines and through support, which was embedded in those disciplines" (Boughhey, 2010).

The concept of developmental education helps us to rather understand that academic practice is developed over time, and is not a set of skills that are content-independent and practiced in a void. Academic skills are developed through engagement with 'complex tasks that require subject knowledge and an understanding of the nature of knowledge in the specific discipline.' (Wingate, 2007). Developmental education requires implementation through a range of strategies and suggests that students need different input or support at different times. Developmental education is an integral component of student support provided within a programme or qualification to ensure student success.

5.3.2 *Issues and debates*

The concept of an integrated approach to developmental education raises several issues and debates which, as yet are unresolved and which institutions will need to explore within their own contexts.

- The first issue is about context itself: this framework acknowledges that institutions may have existing developmental education approaches and policies. However, in this framework we want to encourage institutions to review their developmental education approach and policies and explore a more integrated approach in their implementation

to improve quality, by being more inclusive, more culturally responsive and more participatory.

- The second issue is about human resources: the approach to developmental education that we are proposing relies on the use of teacher educators and/or tutors and/or mentors to guide and support students through their developmental education journey. Many institutions do not have the staff, or the budget to increase their staff. We can try to mitigate these challenges by using teacher educators to play this role alongside the support they give students anyway in the academic programme; or by using the same tutors / mentors for different components of the programme such as WIL, developmental education, academic tutoring, or by using strategies in which students support each other thus reducing the need for tutors / mentors, and by co-operating with existing structures such as teaching and learning centres / writing centres.
- A third issue relates to the structure of the programme. Institutions will have to consider how to structure the Diploma and Degree programmes to allow for more integrated academic, developmental education and assessment strategies.

5.4. **Guidelines for programme development**

5.4.1 Content

The literature review (Harrison, 2017) identified the primary areas in which students required support as being foundational mathematics competencies; English reading and writing; information literacy; social-emotional skills and subject specific skills. The nature of that content can be derived from the kind of support students might need in relation to the demands across the entire academic programme i.e. Diploma / Degree in ECCE. Table 5.1 illustrates how we can think about this content in relation to student support needs across all components of the programme framework, and the kind of resources that can be integrated in order to support learning.

Table 5. 1: Student support needs and developmental education content and resources

Programme Framework Component	Student Support:	Developmental Education: Content	Resources:
1. Purpose, mission and vision 2. Target audience / context 3. Principles	Kind of teacher we need; our view of children/ childhood, quality, inclusivity, pedagogy.	a. Professionalism	Student orientation sessions
4. Knowledge & Practice Standards and Curriculum	Pedagogy that is supportive of learning (e.g. student-centred and activity-based vs lecture-based) and models and encourages good practice early childhood pedagogy.	a. English: conversational, written and verbal presentation, academic essay writing, case studies, discipline specific discourse, etc.; b. Mathematical Literacy/Foundational understanding.	Learning guides adopt activity-based pedagogies; Resources are integrated and relate to Birth to Four curriculum.
5. RPL	PoE development support	a. Digital literacy (see also WIL); b. Academic: information literacy, discipline specific reading and writing, discipline specific discourse, referencing and plagiarism, critical thinking, evaluation, study skills	
6. WIL	Implementation support (planning, transport, CoP, reflection, access to ECCE sites, ECCE site culture, sharing resources, problem solving, networking, study groups/peer support, community engagement, parent involvement)	a. Report writing; b. Record keeping, scheduling; c. Keeping a journal; d. Programme planning; e. Time management;	ECCE resources such as charts, health records, administrative records, etc.

			f. Communication / networking; g. Minute-taking; h. Digital literacy	
7.	Assessment Strategy	Assessment support in the form of guidelines, schedules, variety of assessment methods, tools and instruments, PoE development support	a. Exam writing; b. Time management; c. Report and essay writing; d. Research skills; e. Digital literacy	Assessment guidelines, exam schedules, planning tools, rubrics, mark records
8.	Articulation and alignment	Integration & articulation with other qualifications embedded in the model	a. Career guidance / exploration; b. Study choices	
9.	Mode of delivery	Contact sessions, tutorials, online learning, syndicate groups	a. Digital literacy; b. Time management; c. Networking and communication	Internet café / Computer Centre with access to wifi
10.	Context	Acknowledgement and understanding of diversity in ECCE contexts	a. Critical thinking, problem solving etc. b. Networking & collaboration skills	
11.	Resources	Mode of delivery (ICT, technology and connectivity, access to libraries and other resources, partnerships, access to play and learning environments,	a. Creative thinking, problem solving; b. Reading instructions; c. Networking and communication d. Personal admin (eg. CV, etc.)	Technological backup
12.	Administration	Registration, fees, resources, student handbook – student orientation on admission / commencement of the academic year	a. Financial planning; b. Time management; c. Rules and procedures; d. Class participation; e. Scheduling; f. Digital literacy	

13. Student support	Integrated across the programme and within Developmental Education	
14. Planning	Integrated into developmental education	
15. African perspectives / Indigenous knowledge	Acknowledgement and understanding of diversity in ECCE contexts; alternative views of children / childhood; child rearing practices; education through and for democracy	a. Diversity b. Critical thinking, problem solving etc. c. Collaboration skills

5.4.2 Structure

The structure of a developmental education programme should be aligned to the structure of the academic programme i.e. Diploma / Degree in ECCE. This ensures that the content of the developmental programme provides students with the support they need at the appropriate times. For example, at the beginning of the academic programme students may be expected to spend time during their first teaching practice to observe in an early learning site, keep a journal of their experience, and write a brief report. An appropriate developmental education module, is offered just before the WIL module, to provide students with recording skills (for the observation), basic report writing and journal writing skills. During the WIL module students apply what they learn and are given an opportunity to submit a report and/or journal for assessment against their developmental education as part of their WIL.

We should consider what developmental education may be needed before students enter the academic programme, possibly some kind of short bridging course. This could be standard for everyone or based on needs identified by an entry developmental assessment. There is the argument that an entry assessment could be seen as a deficit approach, separating off those students who 'fail' from those who don't. One way around this would be to integrate a 'developmental bridging' component into the first six months of the academic programme content and assessment strategy, in this way supporting learner transition and reinforcing skills.

At different times within the structure of the developmental education programme a variety of strategies, pedagogies and assessment methods should be used, that also align with the strategies, pedagogies and methodologies used in the academic programme itself. For example, if the academic programme adopts a student support strategy of establishing study groups those same strategies could support developmental education.

5.4.3 Assessment Strategy

Assessment in the developmental education programme should be for credits and as far as possible integrated into the overall academic programme. The example of WIL given above describes one way in which the assessment of the developmental programme can be integrated into the academic programme. Added to this, students should have opportunities to develop concepts and skills before they are assessed. In other words, students should not be assessed on their research skills if they have not yet been taught or provided the opportunity to acquire such skills.

Students should be given a number of opportunities to demonstrate achievement of developmental education outcomes, to improve and to succeed throughout the academic programme. For example, when students submit a research assignment for assessment in the academic programme, any developmental education (in this case research skills, for example) is assessed alongside the assessment of the assignment, using relevant assessment instruments and rubrics. Students receive feedback on this assessment and have another opportunity to be assessed against the same criteria on submission of the next relevant assignment.

5.5.4 Human Resources

In general, an integrated approach to developmental education requires team teaching and strong coordination between lecturers, tutors and students:

a. Role of lecturers: Where possible ECCE specialist lecturers actively interweave developmental education into the professional-technical ECCE content;

b. Role of tutors and mentors: Specialist developmental education lecturers are involved as active, engaged class-attending tutors and mentors. The roles of tutors, developmental education lecturers and ECCE specialist lecturers can be played by the same or different people, dependent on staffing structure at universities. It is in implementing these support functions of staff that institutions will need to be creative and assertive.

c. Students support each other through on- or off-site study groups / communities of practice / support groups, appropriate to the mode of delivery. Students make use of technology, such as whatsapp, to which they have easy access.

d. Other university / organisational support structures, such as existing writing centres or centres for teaching and learning, are used either in specialist tutor roles and/or in complementary roles.

5.5.5 Resources

Students engage in self-study of developmental education using high quality learning guides, blended with face to face support / tutorials. The learning guides should reflect the same strategies, pedagogies and methodologies used in the overall academic programme.

Relevant resources, such as planning tools, charts, records and early learning resources for children, that require the application of developmental education knowledge and skills, are used and assessed towards developmental education progress.

5.5.6 Technology

Online technology can support developmental education by facilitating access to tools, digital resources and references. Institutions should consider whether to develop a separate platform specific to developmental education or whether all the resources for the entire programme are integrated into one platform. Other social media and mobile technologies can be used as a means of providing tutor / mentor support, and of students supporting each other.

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CHAPTER 6

PEDAGOGIES IN TEACHER EDUCATION FOR ECCE

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6.1 Introduction

The higher education contexts in South Africa and academic staff developers have a huge role to play in assisting universities to create enabling conditions and to enhance capacity for teaching and learning (CHE, 2017). We argue that the pedagogies implemented in higher education for capacity building of early childhood teachers is highly contributory to the quality of child outcomes. The importance of a well qualified workforce is often emphasised through policy and research but these understandings to enhance capacity for teaching and learning, do not necessarily translate into effective practice as issues of compliance, management and organisation takes precedence. Pedagogy in higher education has tended to focus more on barriers and challenges rather than acknowledging that there might be the need for adopting new skills in teaching, learning and assessment (Mitchell et al 2006). It is therefore critical that pedagogy for ECCE in higher education is not 'business as usual" but rather a thoughtful endeavour to steer the actions of a high quality workforce for noteworthy child outcomes making a difference to SA society.

6.2 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to foreground the pedagogies that are relevant to ECCE teacher education in higher education. Miller, Dalli and Urban (2012) state that professionalism in early childhood practice cannot be defined in universalistic terms rather it is something that must be embedded in local contexts, visible in relational interactions and involving multiple layers of knowledge, judgment and influences from the broader societal context. We argue that the same is true for pedagogy in higher education. This chapter makes a particular case for

culturally responsive, inclusive and participatory pedagogies. We believe these pedagogies goes some way to address the complexity and variability in the field. Taking the account the history and current status of ECCE these pedagogies open up possibilities for active and student-centred ways of learning.

6.3 Dominant pedagogy in higher education

The pedagogical landscape for most early childhood teacher preparation programmes are framed by dominant pedagogies that disfavours the preparation of teachers for early childhood education as critically reflective practitioners. These pedagogies stem from an authoritative discourse which includes traditions of early childhood education preparation. An authoritative discourse is historically derived from power and authority which binds individuals and demands unconditional allegiance (Massing 2015). For many years the early childhood field has been dominated by this form of authority, power and allegiance which has been evident in texts, policies, regulations, standards and programmes emanating mostly from western sources. This dominant pedagogy has been implemented into ways of how teachers teach and care for young children (Massing 2015).

Authoritative discourse is characterised by western child development theories which promotes the understanding of a universal childhood that is decontextualised and distanced from situational experiences of young children and the students themselves. Furthermore, an authoritative discourse creates the sense of the truth regimes that are compulsory to include in teacher preparation programmes for the early years (Kirova, Massing, Prochner & Cleghorn 2016). This exists despite the criticisms of these framings for ECCE teacher education (Kirova, Massing, Prochner & Cleghorn 2016). The authoritative versions of knowledge positions teacher educators as knowers if they subscribe to its philosophy, principles and teachings. The students on the other hand, are led to think that authoritative knowledge will lead to them becoming effective early years teaching. Where, for example, a decontextualised approach to developmentally appropriate practice is mainstream, ECCE student teachers could then focus on development solely to the detriment of culturally and linguistically appropriate practice.

An authoritative discourse in early childhood education also favours schoolification (Van Laere, Peters & Vandenbroeck 2012), which is characterised by the teacher being the technician who delivers a curriculum engaging in "performative professionalism" whereby the "correct action is determined in relation to universal competence standards and codes of practice" (Taggert, 2011, p. 88). This idea of universal competence of young children is endorsed by most policy makers and practice, thus excluding teachers from the production of knowledge that governs the field (Kirova, Massomg, Prochner & Cleghorn 2016). Thus professionalism cannot be defined in simple universalistic and inflexible terms (Miller, Dalli & Urban 2012).

Professionalism has a strong link with local contexts, visible in relational interactions, ethical and political in nature, and involving multiple layers of knowledge, judgement, and influences from the broader societal context (Kirova, Massomg, Prochner & Cleghorn 2016). These multiple layers need to be understood when designing a pedagogy for early childhood teacher education programmes. The teacher educator must resist the tempatation to become a technician delivering outcomes to students.(Lobman & Ryan, 2007; Woodrow, 2008). When such a role is dominant, culturally-based understandings that students bring to their teacher preparation about teaching and learning are ignored and unconsidered (Montecino 2004, cited in Wilgus 2013. P, 7).

6.4 Transforming higher education pedagogy for early childhood teacher preparation

In order for pedagogy to move away from an authoritative discourse and its constraining effects, it needs transformation towards a more learner-centred, work-centred and attribute-focused pedagogy (Chappell 2004; Smith & Blake 2005). Where this is the case emphasis is placed on transforming people with teachers using different pedagogical strategies to serve the need of learners and contexts (Smith & Blake 2005). Smith and Blake (2005) state that pedagogy within higher education should place teacher educators as facilitators of learning with the learner playing an active role in the construction of knowledge. Gamble (2013) more recently argues that contemporary vocational pedagogy goes far beyond just 'learning by doing'. She sees the need for conceptual knowledge and higher order thinking skills and places

emphasis on the importance of situated and social learning as well as constructivist and experiential modes of learning. Corbel (2013) places emphasis on the importance of transformative learning with the procedural and compliance oriented, and more competency based training. These observations have resulted in more learner centred, transformative, constructive and socially critical modes (Bedi & Germein 2016)

Bearing the above in mind, transforming pedagogy for higher education pedagogy for early childhood teacher preparation calls for a mixture of pedagogies that are culturally responsive, inclusive and participatory.

6.5 Affirming pedagogies for ECCE teacher education

6.5.1 *Culturally responsive pedagogy*

Many teacher educators avoid discussions on diversity issues for myriad of reasons. This results in numerous novice teachers graduating with a lack quality learning opportunities to become well-versed on issues of diversity in meaningful ways that can translate to practice. Researchers have elaborated on instructional practices and resources used by teacher educators who, grounded in an understanding of diversity awareness and identity development as well as culturally relevant pedagogy, are actively preparing the next generation of teachers who are culturally responsive (Ellerrock , Cruz, Vasquez & Howes, 2016)

As teacher educators , we recognise the difficulties associated with teaching about issues of diversity and facilitating preservice teachers' pre-service teachers' acquisition of culturally relevant pedagogy. We also acknowledge that culture is constantly evolving and that the issues of diversity that arise vary with context within South Africa and internationally. Culturally relevant pedagogy requires that teachers genuinely care about their students. In addition, Ladson- Billings (1995) argue that "culturally relevant pedagogy would also necessarily propose to do three things—produce students who can achieve academically, produce students who demonstrate cultural competence, and develop students who can both understand and critique the existing social order". Ellerbrock et.al (2016:227) complement culturally relevant pedagogy

with a framework for diversity awareness and identity development to push the field forward and support teacher educators who yearn to prepare culturally responsive pre-service teacher training.

Culturally responsive pedagogy is premised on the idea that culture is central to student learning. Culturally responsive pedagogy also describes an approach that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Han, Vomvoridi-Ivanović, Jacobs, Karanxha, Lypka, Topdemir & Feldman,2014).

Various pedagogical practices that could help ECCE educators have been developed and documented, across disciplines. Reflecting through journal writing or self-assessment tools and participating in book clubs would also help ECCE educators to increase their sociolinguistic awareness and to examine and challenge stereotypes about culture, race, language, gender, and class, amongst others. Organising first-hand learning experiences with diverse students in their communities and with their families is another commonly used practice that would allow ECCE educators to gain deeper insights on using culturally responsive pedagogy. Visiting and conducting community walks, participating in community service-learning and fulfilling field experiences in diverse contexts are considered as effective experiences that would support ECCE educators' learning of culturally responsive pedagogy. Lastly, framing college classroom environments or activities through the perspectives of underserved and underrepresented students is another instructional practice which could be used to prepare ECCE educators to use culturally responsive pedagogy.

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is a comprehensive endeavour that encompasses attention to student needs, curriculum content, counselling and guidance, instructional strategies, and performance assessment (Sobel, Gutierrez, Zion and Blanchett (2011). The authors stress that a responsive programme should strive to form partnerships with family members as communication dynamics may be intensified when cultural differences between teachers and

families are present. All educators should be challenged to build networks among students' communities in order to further incorporate relevant experiences and resources into school practices. Therefore, ECCE teacher education programme should engage in professional development that supports systematic processes to connect every future educator with relevant resources and community- based learning opportunities.

Practices for preparing teachers who are culturally responsive

The following table describes how teacher educators prepare students to become culturally responsive.

Table 6.1: Practices for Culturally Responsive Educators (adapted from Ellerbrock, et al :2016)

Establishing a Positive Classroom Learning Environment	If the instructor does not nurture an atmosphere that values diversity and fosters alliances between and among (pre-service teachers) PSTs and teacher educator, the university classroom has the potential to become a place of great discontent and even conflict. Learning occurs within the social context of a classroom; thus, the establishment of a positive classroom environment is a vital element of culturally responsive teaching.
Build Relationships	Creating a sense of belonging requires teacher educators to allow the time and provide the structures for class members to build relationships with one another, create Semester-long learning circles made up of heterogeneous groups of four to five would promote these collegial relationships. PSTs who work collaboratively to develop deeper understandings of course materials. To establish learning

	circles, set time aside during the first few class sessions for each learning circle's members to get to know one another through a series of structured activities (e.g., icebreakers). It is this bond that will help foster a sense of belonging.
Promote Cooperation	Incorporating cooperative learning also has the potential to cultivate an environment where class members feel vested in each other's success. To be successful, cooperative learning activities must explicitly support positive interdependence and individual accountability, encourage the success of others, promote social skill development, and include a group processing component.
Encourage Self-Reflection	Providing PSTs with opportunities for self-reflection and participating in those opportunities as the course instructor to model self-reflection would help PSTs develop their diversity awareness. Effective teacher educators provide opportunities for their students to not only self-reflect, but also participate in reflecting on their own beliefs and practices.
Implementing Purposeful Learning Activities	Activities that PSTs engage in during their assignments can also facilitate their growth in diversity awareness and encourage them to understand and critique the existing social order. PSTs will be better equipped to do the same for their own birth to school going children. Such activities encourage PSTs to build cultural competence, investigate school demographics, and make meaning of inequities, build

	socio-political consciousness, examine their own assumptions, and/or consider cross-cultural perspectives.

The following points are also considered as purposeful learning activities and should be utilised by the teacher educator:

- Build Cultural Competence
- Investigate School Demographics
- Make Meaning of Inequities
- Build Sociopolitical Consciousness
- Examine One's Own Assumptions

Culturally responsive pedagogy to educate every child well is a long term commitment, not only to our students but also to society. A nation of diverse ECCE children and the future of society depends on our efforts as an effective teacher educator.

6.5.1 *Participatory pedagogy*

A participatory pedagogy resonates with the work carried out by Paulo Freire in Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970). A critical consciousness is developed when using this participatory framework. Thus students become agents whilst developing solutions to their problems and educators problematise the world that surrounds the oppressed learner so that learners can reflect on their own realities (Freire 1970). Freire (1970) refers to the lecturing approach to education as 'banking' whereby the lecturer banks the knowledge to students. (Freire, 1970). He further argues that such an approach creates naive consciousness with the educated whereby individuals are aware of the situation but do not do not undertake any concrete steps to change the situation.

Freire thus offers a participatory pedagogy whereby both the educator and the learner contribute to the learning process. The adoption of Freire's participatory framework that

contributes to a participatory pedagogy is useful to consider within the context of pedagogy for ECCE in higher education. This contribution will lead to a dialogical process between teacher trainers and students and students of ECCE will be given an opportunity to think creatively and problem solve critically. This participatory pedagogy will also give students an opportunity to conscientize students on the importance of the value of the work they do with young children in ECCE.

Another understanding of a participatory pedagogy comes from the work carried out by Formosinho and Formosinho (2015). The authors contend that democracy is understood as a concept that sits at the heart of a participatory pedagogy. A participatory pedagogy places emphasis on equality and inclusion of all with respect for diversities. A participatory pedagogy ensures that teacher educators value pre-service teachers voices and actions in practice and that they are supported to guide pre-service students to become conscious of their own learning. A participatory pedagogy is co-constructed and promotes a different view of the learning process, of pre-service students, of teacher educators and the learning environment (Formosinho & Formosinho 2015). In the context of teacher training for birth to four a participatory pedagogy could be designed to promote different views of teaching and learning. Just as a participatory pedagogy aims to involve children in the experience and the construction of learning in continuous and interactive learning the same applies in relation to interactive teaching with teacher training for birth to four.

With images of the child being that of an active, competent being, so too is the image of a student in teacher training of being an active competent being. The motivation of learning is sustained by the intrinsic interest in the task and in the intrinsic motivation of children and adults (Formosinho & Formosinho 2016). Similarly as the learning process is an interactive development between child and adult and the educational spaces and times are designed to enable this interactive education the same is relative to how educational spaces are designed by teacher trainers for students to enable interactive education. If students experience a

pedagogy that is participatory in nature then they too will invite a participatory pedagogy in their practice

6.5.3 *Inclusive pedagogy*

Promoting inclusive pedagogies in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) strongly relates to our theory of change. Moreover, inclusive pedagogy focuses on the content (what) and pedagogy (how) to train students in HEIs (Danowitz & Tuitt, 2011). In contrast, Dewsbury (2015) argues that inclusive pedagogy is essentially about the mindset and awareness of the instructor in relation to student diversity.

Hockings (2010) defines inclusive pedagogies in higher educations as follows:

> Inclusive learning and teaching in higher education refers to the ways in which pedagogy, curricula and assessment are designed and delivered to engage students in learning that is meaningful, relevant and accessible to all. It embraces a view of the individual and individual difference as the source of diversity that can enrich the lives and learning of others.

Scholars such as May and Bridger (2010), contend that HEIs need to embed inclusive policies and practices to enhance learning of all students, especially those historically marginalised or excluded. Two important aspects for quality higher education include (i) disability equality and (ii) widening participation. However, this requires systemic and cultural change, as well as enhancing staff attitudes and professional practice. Similarly, Danowitz and Tuitt (2011) and Hitch, Macfarlane and Nihill (2015) are in accord that strategic administrative actions, curricular change, and pedagogical change are required across HEIs.

Aims of inclusive pedagogical initiatives

In the UK, HEIs introduced the following inclusive pedagogical initiatives, emphasising the importance of shared responsibility and consistent uptake across the entire institution.

Table 6.2: Inclusive pedagogical initiative and aims

Inclusive Pedagogical Initiative	Aim
Enhancing learning, teaching and assessment strategies and practices for disabled students.	To achieve a more inclusive approach to learning, teaching and assessment.
Success for all: from widening participation to enhancing student achievement.	To provide the learning and support infrastructure to promote students' access, reduce barriers to learning, improve student retention and enhance achievement for all students.
Building curricula to meet the needs of the 21st century learner.	To develop and embed tools to enhance the design and delivery of programmes that promote diversity.
Bridging the digital divide: widening participation and success through e-learning platforms.	To enable students who have historically been excluded to access and benefit from the University's e-learning and communications.
Widening participation and students' writing in the disciplines.	To develop a coherent approach within the curriculum to develop students' academic literacy.
An integrated approach to equality and diversity.	To create a learning environment that values and embraces diversity through inclusive policies and practices.
Embedding inclusive curriculum practices.	To develop sustainable approaches towards inclusive curriculum design, delivery and assessment.
Developing inclusive curricula in higher education.	To embed effective inclusive practices in learning, teaching and assessment.

Adapted from May & Bridger, 2010

Danowitz and Tuitt's (2011) study in the USA, promote inclusive pedagogical initiatives that focus on diversifying the curriculum and integrating practices that embody multiple student identities. This includes the following.

Inclusive Pedagogical Initiative	**Aim**
Focusing on students' social and academic (intellectual) development.	To offer the best possible course of study appropriate for the students' context.
Purposely designing and using educational resources to enhance students' participation, learning and achievement.	To establish a learning environment that challenges every student to achieve academically at high levels while encouraging every student to contribute to all students' overall learning and development.
Paying attention to the cultural differences diverse learners bring to the educational experience and how those cultural differences enhance the teaching and learning environment.	To promote students' understanding of, and respect for cultural diversity. To use cultural diversity as a resource.
Creating a welcoming classroom environment that engages all students.	To utilise diversity in the pursuit of individual and collaborative learning.
Using a range of teaching, learning and assessment strategies.	To guide students to consider how they could promote equity, examine assumptions, ask questions, and question cultural myths related to the prevailing social order.
Examining race, gender, inclusive values, knowledge and pedagogy.	Developing a higher education programme as an opportunity for curricular and pedagogical reform that produces graduates

	with the capacity to provide leadership for highly diverse organisations.
Examining diversity in meaningful ways, rather than as an add-on.	To challenge students to apply the knowledge they acquired to promote equity and social justice.

Hitch, Macfarlane and Nihill (2015) examined the support provided to Australian academics to implement inclusive teaching. These researchers note that HEIs are attracting students who are increasingly diverse, with varied levels of readiness for higher education. Instead of focusing on individual challenges, HEIs should focus on adaptations required in the learning environment. Moreover, rather than perpetuating the deficit model of difference, a more sophisticated understanding of diversity is promoted that considers students' characteristics, such as previous education, personal disposition, cultural background and current circumstances. Consequently, student diversity is regarded as a resource that enhances learning. Despite this, professional development for academic staff is inadequate as it mainly consists of once-off training sessions.

Inclusive pedagogical approach

The inclusive pedagogical approach based on the philosophy of inclusive pedagogy, was developed in the context of higher education and has since widely been applied to teacher education. It includes the following considerations.

- All educational settings are more diverse today than ever before – ethnicity, culture, languages, disability status (Florian, 2015).
- Inclusive pedagogical approach promotes the creation of rich learning experiences and making them available for everyone so that all students can participate in classroom life (Florian, 2015).
- Inclusive pedagogy acknowledges students' individual differences but avoids viewing differences as problems, as this relates to stigma associated with difference.
- Schools are encouraged to include a greater diversity of students.
- Teacher educators should view their students' learning as a shared activity.

- Teacher educators should design and implement strategies to raise the achievement of all students.
- Teacher educators should develop their craft knowledge to enable them to extend what is generally available to all students.
- By experiencing this during their teacher training, student teachers will be able to implement it in their own classrooms.
- Student teachers should experience how inclusive education extends the scope of ordinary ways of thinking about improving learning, assessing performance and performing assessments.
- Teacher educators should train their students to engage in inclusive practices, collaborative actions, as well as professional and social networks that actively seek to enhance social justice.
- Student teachers should understand that teachers' engagement with families is also essential.
- Teacher educators should train teachers to address exclusion, underachievement and collaboration with other professionals.
- Teacher educators should ensure that their students develop:
    - The core expertise (knowing, doing, believing) of inclusive pedagogy – recognising the potential of all students (Pantic & Florian, 2015; Majoko, 2016a), and
    - Basic skills needed for successful inclusion (see Majoko, 2016a, 2016b), which include:
        i. Basic knowledge of the characteristics of students with various disabilities.
        ii. Student teachers' understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the special education process, including referral (responses to intervention, assessments, individualised planning, classroom assistance, working with children and families).
        iii. Early screening and identification of barriers to learning.
        iv. Exposure and assessment of all children to the mainstream curriculum.
        v. Modifications and adaptations to the curriculum to optimise achievement of all children.
        vi. Altering instruction to meet needs of children with diverse abilities.

Implications of inclusive pedagogies for ECCE teachers' classroom practice

- Inclusive pedagogies relates to the practical implementation of inclusive education (Vaz *et al*., 2015).
- It promotes positive attitudes of teachers towards inclusion (Nishimura, 2014).
- It enables teachers' to develop a deeper understanding of inclusive practices (Majoko, 2016a, 2016b).
- Teachers' engagement in pedagogical practice is essential to empower them to apply knowledge of individual differences – how teachers respond to individual differences, the pedagogical choices teachers make and how they utilise specialist knowledge.
- Differential instructional techniques is essential.
- Teacher education should provide opportunities for teachers to practice how to differentiate their lessons (Majoko, 2016a) since this is key to effective professional development.
- Teacher professional development should be accompanied by coaching, modelling and reflection on practice.
- Teachers' collaboration with colleagues and other stakeholders is essential for creating communities of practice with colleagues, including how to communicate effectively and how to engage in co-teaching partnerships.
- Teacher education should ensure that student teachers master effective classroom management strategies. This will enable them to enhance their learners' academic engagement and pro-social behaviour, and enable them to manage challenging behaviour (Majoko, 2016a).

6.6 Guidelines for programme development

It is imperative that teacher educators and higher education institutions commit to preparing teachers who can implement culturally responsive, inclusive and participatory pedagogies. It is also necessary that teacher educators train teachers in ECCE who have the knowledge and skills necessary to not only meet the needs of a diverse ECCE student body, but also to sustain the

linguistic, literate, and cultural plurality of the students in our classrooms that is the hallmark of democratic schooling.

To aid the above effort, teacher educators can establish and maintain a positive classroom learning environment, implement purposeful learning activities, and provide quality field experiences that support pre-service teachers' development of diversity awareness. It is only through this kind of thoughtful and intense reflection that future teachers will be equipped to work successfully with diverse students. We would like to encourage additional research of this sort along with research that focuses on ways international cultural diversity impacts how diversity is conceptualised, approached, and supported in international teacher education and practice. Furthermore, teacher educators are encouraged to research and publish about the impact of pedagogical diversity initiatives on pre-service teachers and the ECCE students in their charge. The time has come to spend less energy theorising about issues of diversity and the resistance to them and more energy researching strategies to facilitate pre-service progress toward acceptance and internalisation. Such scholarship would aid teacher education programmes in the preparation of pre-service teachers who will support ECCE learners to achieve academically, demonstrate cultural competence, and understand and critique the existing social order.

Additionally, as noted by Danowitz and Tuitt (2011), in order for HEIs to change their policies and practices to embrace diversity, its leadership should be committed to diversity and all stakeholders should be willing to learn from the challenges that will inevitably accompany the change process. For this reason, PIECCE recognises the need to link our work in inclusive pedagogy with our theory of change.

This commitment, to educate every child well, cannot end when the pre-service teachers leaves our institution, but rather I*t is a long-term commitment, not just to our students but also to society*. A nation of diverse ECCE learners and the future of our society are depending on our efforts.

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CHAPTER 7

ASSESSMENT

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7.1 Introduction

In recent years higher education institutions in South Africa have been subjected to increasing levels of scrutiny and calls for accountability. Recent trends of low and declining graduation rates , indications that graduates are not meeting the expectations of future employers in terms of 'graduateness' as well as indications that students may not be developing crucial 21st century skills such critical thinking and problem solving pose a question on how higher education institutions assess what students have learnt in their programmes . Being able to assess what students are learning has been found to be central in understanding what they know and are able to do. It can also provide insights on how to improve instruction in the future and as well as in identifying pedagogical practices and curricular structures that are best poised to accomplish the set outcomes for students. Research has shown that current assessment systems and policies for ECCE educators reinforce and reward a narrow view of effectiveness and competence while missing best practices that should be fostered and recognised in professionals working with children from birth to 8 years (Allen& Kelly, 2015).

Given the current weaknesses of the system of basic education, many students enter Higher Education with limited academic skills. As shown in other chapters in this report, many students demonstrate a lack of confidence in strategic reading and writing, and have few tools to expand their academic skills generally, and their reading and writing skills in particular. Moreover, there is a high dropout rate of practising ECD practitioners in post professional qualification studies due to poor academic skills and ineffective study habits. Furthermore student teachers that will register in ECCE teacher education programmes will have varied backgrounds, different insights, competencies and experiences in ECD. They will also have different learning styles and will practice in different contexts. There is therefore a need for a

performance based assessment system that will enable student teachers to demonstrate what they know and can do.

7.2 Purpose of the chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to examine what could be the nature of assessment in ECCE teacher education. The chapter opens with a conceptualisation of assessment. It then explores the competencies that should be fostered and recognised in professionals working with children from birth to 4 and the relevant assessment practices thereof. It closes by proposing guidelines on assessment for the ECCE programme framework.

7.3 Concepts, Issues and Debates

7.3.1 *Conceptualising assessment and its purposes*

The concept of assessment in Higher Education Institution (HEIs) in South Africa has developed to such an extent that the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) promotes the development of HE staff as certified assessors and frowns upon the notion of underprepared and underqualified staff taking part in formal assessment (Riley, 2013). Assessment can be defined in a number of ways. According to the South African Qualifications Authority National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for NQF Qualifications and Part-Qualifications and Professional Designations in South, assessment is viewed as:

> "the process used to identify, gather and interpret information and evidence against the required competencies in a qualification, part-qualification, or professional designation in order to make a judgement about a learner's achievement "(SAQA, 2015: 4).

Similarly , Maphalala (in Okeke, et.al 2016) defines assessment as a process of gathering and interpreting evidence about learners' performance using clearly defined assessment criteria to determine what the learner knows, and can do.

The above definitions of assessment foreground five important aspects about assessment that are helpful to consider in ECCE teacher education programmes. Firstly, assessment is

a process and not an event. This means that assessment evidence should be gathered over a period of time before judgement about the individual's performance is made. Secondly, the term process also denotes that the gathering of assessment evidence should be systematic, planned and have clear criteria for it to be authentic and reliable.

I believe the above aspects on assessment are what prompted Darling-Hammond and Snyders (2010) to identify four characteristics of authentic assessments of teaching:

> (1) the assessment should sample the actual knowledge , skills, and dispositions desired of teachers in real teaching and learning contexts;
>
> 2) the assessments integrate multiple facets of knowledge and skill used in teaching practice;
>
> (3) multiple sources of evidence are collected over time and in diverse contexts; and
>
> (4) assessment evidence is evaluated by individuals with relevant expertise against an agreed-on set of standards that matter for teaching performance.

Thirdly, assessment is purposeful- it is done to determine an individual's performance and achievement. Performance is seen as multi-dimensional as it refers to what an individual knows and can do. Fourthly, during assessment and individual is assessed against the required competencies in a qualification or professional designation. Fifthly, assessment is conducted at various level can be at various levels - programme level and course level and this is a process that involves a framework for placing priority and attention on the process of student learning, programme and course objectives , organisation of the curriculum , pedagogy and student development. .

A new view on teaching and learning is that assessment is inextricably linked to teaching and learning. Assessment is therefore not an incidental activity separate from teaching, but a deliberate and conscious part of it. Bloom's taxonomy which was developed to classify educational goals for evaluating student performance is still widely valued and used as a strategy for teaching and assessing learners. It brought about a paradigm shift

in the way teachers have been assessing learners. According to Bloom's taxonomy, human learning can be classified into three domains: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Within each level are sub-categories which focus on levels of learning development, which also increase in difficulty. According to Bloom's taxonomy is level must be mastered before one progresses to the next.

Table 7.1: Domains of learning in Bloom's Taxonomy

COGNITIVE DOMAIN	AFFECTIVE DOMAIN	PSYCHOMOTOR DOMAIN	
Creating	Characterising	Mastering	(Higher order thinking skills are at the top).
Evaluating	Organising	Producing	
Analysing	Valuing	Conforming	
Applying	Responding	Simulating	
Understanding	Receiving	Perceiving	
Remembering			

The next section examines the types of assessment processes in relation to its inextricably link to teaching and learning.

7.3.2 *Types of assessment*

7.3.2.1 *Assessment for learning (AfL)*

According to Swaffield , (2011) assessment for learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by students and their teachers to decide where the students are in their learning , where they need to go and how best to get there. Similarly,

Maphalala (2016), views assessment for learning as a continuous process of gathering and interpreting evidence about students' learning for the purpose of determining student's progress to inform teaching and learning process Black, Harrison and William (2004) as cited in Black (2011) also define assessment of learning as any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students learning. They claim that it differs from assessment designed for accountability, or of ranking or certifying competence.

The above definitions suggest that assessment can support leaning. William (2011) argues that, for assessment to support learning, it must provide guidance about the next steps in instruction and must be provided in a way that encourages students to direct energy towards growth rather than well-being. William (2007, 2011) therefore proposes the following as two features that are important when one is designing assessment that support learning. The first feature is that the evidence generated should be instructionally tractable. This means that the evidence should be more than just information about the presence of gaps between current and desired performance. The evidence must also provide feedback /information about what kinds of instructional activities are likely to result in improving performance. AfL should therefore help to provide feedback to both the teachers and students. For example from the feedback, students may realise that they have gaps in their content knowledge and teachers may also realise that they need to employ alternative pedagogical practices if feedback reveals that current practices are not the relevant and appropriate tools to use towards the achievement of set teaching and learning goals.

The second feature to consider when designing assessment to support learning is that the student engages in actions to improve learning. In this instance the student could engage in remedial activities provided by the teacher, may seek specific support from peers or reflect on different ways to move own learning forward. By engaging in the above practical techniques the student would be acting upon the feedback received from assessment of learning.

Swaffiled, (2011:436) also suggests research-based principles to guide assessment for learning practices, and these are: Assessment for learning should

- be part of effective planning of teaching and learning
- focus on how students learn
- be recognised as central to classroom practice
- regarded as a key professional skill for teachers
- be sensitive and constructive because any assessment has an emotional impact
- take account of the importance of learner motivation
- promote commitment to learning goals and shared understanding of the criteria by which they are assessed.
- AfL develops learners capacity for self -assessment so that they become reflective and self- managing
- Learners should receive constructive guidance about how to improve
- AfL builds towards the assessment of learning

In order to regulate learning, William and Thompson (2008) propose that assessment for learning can be conceived as involving three main processes exercised by three categories of actors in assessment, namely the teacher, the student and the peer .

The first process seeks to identify where the student is going . The second process focuses on where the student is right now and the last process focuses on how the learner could be supported to reach the set outcomes.

The following table presents aspects of the processes of formative assessment

Where the student learner is going	Who the student is right now	How the student could be supported to reach set outcomes
Teacher : clarifying learning intentions and sharing criteria for success	**Engineering effective classroom discussions , activities and tasks that elicit evidence of learning**	**Providing feedback that moves students forward**
Peer : Understanding and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success	**Activating students as instructional resources for one another**	**Activating students as instructional resources for one another**
Student : Understanding learning intentions and criteria for success	**Activating students as the owners of their own learning.**	

7.3.2.2 Assessment of learning

Assessment of learning relies on gathering evidence by the teacher to make overall judgements of a student achievement against criteria of learning goals. It is usually formal and occurs at or near the end of a learning cycle where it sums up students' performance at a particular point in time. It has a summative element which shows how students are progressing against identified objectives or goals. It also has a formative element that provides evidence that informs longtime planning. The evidence gathered maybe used to communicate student achievement to a variety of stakeholders, for example to students themselves, other teachers, bursary sponsors and government. Teachers must ensure that the assessment criteria are very clear to students before the assessment process. Teachers should therefore explain to students which knowledge and skills are being assessed and the levels of cognition or performance and which rubrics will be for defining criteria and assessing achievement. Feedback should be provided to the students after assessment and could take the form of whole class discussion or student-lecturer interaction.

7.3.2.3 *Assessment as learning*

In assessment as learning, students reflect on and monitor their own progress to inform their future learning goals. It helps students to take greater responsibility for their own learning and to monitor their future directions. Assessment as learning is a form of formative assessment in which students are encouraged to conduct self –assessment, peer- assessment and do their own reflections using journals. The goal is to get students to understand why they are learning and comprehend what they need to do to achieve their learning goals. This process helps the students to understand themselves as learners and become aware of how they learn- to become metacognitive (knowledge about one's own thinking processes or thinking about one's thinking). For students to be able to assess themselves, to continuously reflect on their work and determine what their next learning will be, the lecturer should assist the students to grasp the concept of cognitive levels in a simplified manner by using action words to help students to perform at appropriate cognitive levels of Blooms's Taxanomy (Maphalala, 2016).

Assessment in Open Distance eLearning (ODeL)

While pedagogical theories that inform practices may appear to be the same in both face to face contact and ODeL teaching and learning environments, careful attention must be paid to how one assesses learning in ODeL environments. The transactional distance and physical separation between the teacher and learner makes assessment in ODeL that much more complex. In this regard, an assessment strategy for ODeL environments must consider the mode of education delivery, the profile of learners, learner's access to technology enhanced assessment systems, the role of tutors, the role of markers and the functionality of the assessment system itself.

When assessing in an ODeL environment, efforts must be made to harness partners such as tutors, etutors, markers in order to ensure that there is quick turnaround time on feedback, that alternate systems of assessment is integrated into the curriculum design and furthermore that the learning outcomes are aligned to the type and method of assessment. In this regard an

assessment plan must be designed structurally to ensure that assessment is fair, valid and reliable considering the notional hours for the module.

Aligning notional hours to assessment

According to CHE guidelines, 1 credit equals 10 notional hours. Thus, for example, if a module carries 12 credits, it means that a student will spend a minimum of 120 hours studying that module. The 120 hours includes, reading tutorial letters, prescribed books, study materials, blog entries, responding to discussion forums, completing assessment tasks, submitting assignments and preparation for the examination. The reason for highlighting notional hours is to ensure that the type, method and frequency of assessment must be realistic, practical in alignment with the module outcomes and exit level outcomes of the qualification / programme.

Assessment tools in ODeL

There are many types of tools at the disposal of academics in ODeL. Most of these tools are embedded in the learner management system (LMS). In some institutions the LMS is based on proprietary software such as Blackboard and Moodle. At Unisa for example, the LMS is based on the SEKAI platform. The reason for highlighting the issue of LMS is that some LMS's will have different types of tools to assess. The Unisa LMS for example allows for Gradebook, MCQ, blogs, Wiki's and discussion forums that can be used to enact assessment for learning (AfL). The LMS can also be used for ePortfolio's as a tool for assessment.

eTutors and tutors alike can play a valuable role is providing support to academics for assessment. eTutors for example can assist in assessment for learning where they could provide regular, just in time feedback on student performance individually to students whom they tutor. In modules where class sizes are large, markers are recruited to mark. If trained well, these markers can also provide valuable support in enhancing the quality of assessment

7.4 Assessment practices in ECCE teacher education

SAQA, (2015), advocates for blended assessment. Blended assessment is based on a variety of modes, types, sites outputs, contexts, platforms and other aspects including technology mediated learning. Below are some assessment methods that should be utilized to contribute to a multi-dimensional and blended approach to assessment in ECCE Teacher Education. These assessment methods will help in gathering evidence of ECCE teacher effectiveness and competence in 3 interrelated themes: Professional Practice, Professional Knowledge and Professional mindset, roles and responsibilities.

Assessment methods to refer to strategies, **techniques**, tools and instruments for collecting information to determine the extent to which students demonstrate desired learning outcomes, such as MCQs, case studies, scenarios, observations, practical demonstrations, portfolios, reflective diaries, etc. Several **methods** should be used to **assess** student learning outcomes. It is important to use multiple methods of assessing students. Relying on only one method to provide information about the students' learning will only reflect a part of students' achievement. Additionally, some of the learning outcomes may be difficult to assess using only one method. Assessment methods could be used for formative purpose as well as summative purpose.

7.5.1 Assessment methods for a multidimensional formative purpose

- ✓ *Written assignments*
- ✓ *Oral assignments/presentations*
- ✓ *Structured Portfolios*: These require student teachers to submit specific artifacts of teaching with standardized prompts that require direct responses (Kennedy, 2010). These artifacts and responses are then scored in a standardized way using common evaluation tools, usually rubrics that describe in detail the indicators of performance and these should be designed agreed on by ECCE lecturers in individual institutions
- ✓ *Tests*
- ✓ *Personal journaling*: This promotes teacher reflection on their learning and classroom practices. It can also be used to encourage students to develop and use three

kinds of writing: descriptive, analytical and reflective. Bilingual approach to language development is recommended. That is students could use two languages: Their home language and the language of learning and teaching

- ✓ *Action research*
- ✓ *Observation based assessments*: Designed by lecturers teaching theory, content and methodology courses and be could be linked to school based work integrated learning.

- ✓ *On demand performance tasks*: These present student teachers with problem based scenarios or simulations that mimic authentic teaching situations and do not necessarily have one correct answer. These prompt the student teachers to explain their thinking so as to make their content knowledge , pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge transparent to the assessor.(Arends , 2006)

7.5.2 Assessment methods for summative purposes

- ✓ *Traditional sit down examinations* administered in a standard way for selected courses that require student teachers to demonstrate their knowledge.
- ✓ *On demand performance tasks*: These present student teachers with problem based scenarios or simulations that mimic authentic teaching situations and do not necessarily have one correct answer. These prompt the student teachers to explain their thinking so as to make their content knowledge , pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge transparent to the assessor.(Arends , 2006)

- ✓ *Structured Portfolio*: These require student teachers to collect and submit specific artifacts of teaching with standardized prompts that require direct responses,(Kennedy, 2010) . These artifacts and responses are then scored in a standardized way by trained assessors using common evaluation tools, usually rubrics that describe in detail the indicators of performance and these should be designed agreed upon by a institutions that are members of the PIECCE consortium in this instance. A moderation process is then undertaken to ensure that the scoring process is fair.

7.5.4 Actors in in assessment

ECCE context the lecturer Lecturer assessment: Assessment evidence should be evaluated by ECCE lecturers.

Self -Assessment **:** Student teachers can review and reflect on their knowledge, progress, and what they have learnt and achieved during a unit, topic or project. it allows them to express their own views about their performance, and reflect on the personal and organisational factors that had an impact on their performance, for improvement purposes.

Peer Assessment**:** Students teachers can be involved in observing and recording each other's performance. Peer reflection can also be used in combination with other assessment tools.

Summative assessment

External Assessors and moderators: Assessment evidence should be evaluated by professionals with relevant expertise against agreed on practice standards and their quality indicators using common evaluation tools, usually rubrics that describe in detail the indicators of performance.

7.6. *Baseline and diagnostic assessment*

These should measure foundational knowledge and skills essential for tertiary education and the profession of teaching. Given the current weaknesses of the system of basic education, many students enter Higher Education with limited academic skills. Many students demonstrate lack of confidence in strategic reading and writing, and have few tools to expand their academic skills generally, and their reading and writing skills in particular. Moreover there is a high dropout rate of practising ECD practitioners in post professional qualification studies due to poor academic skills and ineffective study habits. The baseline assessment will help in identify students' academic needs to inform planning for student's academic development.

7.7 Guidelines for programme development

- Assessment is a process. Assessment evidence should be gathered over a period of time before judgement about the individual's performance is made.
- Assessment should be aligned with the 10 knowledge and competencies for ECCE Teacher Education.
- Assessment practices for teacher competency and effectiveness should gather and interpret evidence on 3 interrelated themes: Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional mindset, roles and responsibilities.
- Blended assessment is recommended.
- Assessment should be transparent: Teachers should explain to students which knowledge and skills are being assessed and the levels of cognition or performance and which rubrics will be for defining criteria and assessing achievement.
- Feedback should be provided to the students after assessment.
- Gathering of assessment evidence should be at course and programme level and should be guided by the following types of assessment processes: assessment of learning, assessment for learning and assessment as learning.
- A variety of assessment methods should be used.

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CHAPTER 8

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

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8.1 Introduction

Theoretical knowledge alone does not make one an excellent teacher, since such knowledge does not naturally translate into the ability to intelligently apply it practically in the workplace. As a result, there is a considerable need to prepare students both theoretically and practically, and this is where the Work Integrated Learning (WIL) comes in, to assist in improving students' work readiness. It is a vehicle that bridges the gap between theory and practice by giving students an opportunity to put the theory and the wide range of skills that they have learned into practice in a real classroom setup. Du Plessis (2010:206) put forward the notion that students get an opportunity to learn from authentic work experiences and are required to produce evidence of such learning in the form of portfolios, projects, reports, logbooks, applied assignments and/or presentations to panels for evaluation purposes. The Council of Higher Education (CHE) adds to this by suggesting that it is university learning that is less didactic and more situated, participative, and 'real world' oriented.

To incorporate theoretical forms of learning into practice, it makes sense to then describe WIL as "an educational approach that aligns academic and workplace practices for the mutual benefit of students and workplaces," as Engel-Hills et al. (2010) put it. The South African Council on Higher Education defined WIL in the following ways:

- "…an umbrella term to describe curricular, pedagogic and assessment practices, across a range of academic disciplines that integrate formal learning and workplace concerns".
- "…an approach to career-focussed education that includes classroom-based and workplace-based forms of learning that are appropriate for the professional qualification".

• "…an educational approach that aligns academic and workplace practices for the mutual benefit of students and workplaces". (CHE 2011:4)

Engel-Hills et al.'s (2010) definition of WIL reiterated this by defining WIL as "an educational approach that aligns academic and workplace practices for the mutual benefit of students and workplaces". They further stated that WIL can be categorized into four different types (Table 1).

Table 8.1: Types of WIL

Type		Structure	Application
1	**Work-directed theoretical learning**	Forms of knowledge are sequenced in ways which meet both academic criteria and are applicable and relevant to the career-specific components (Barnet, 2006)	Suits mathematics and physics learning in engineering programmes
2	**Problem-based learning**	Pedagogy that encourages students to learn through the structured exploration of a research or practice-based problem (Savin-Baden & Major, 2004)	Students usually work in small, self-directed groups upon a task which is usually based on a 'real-life' problem (Breslow et al, 2005). The 'problem', which brings more than one discipline together, is carefully structured to direct the students' learning towards outcomes. The lecturer is usually the coordinator and resource person.
3	**Project-based learning**	Combines problem-based learning and experience learning by bringing together intellectual inquiry, real world problems and student engagement in relevant and meaningful work (Barron et al, 1998)	Connects students with communities, service partners, and academic experts.
4	**Workplace learning**	A practical on-site experience at a site of professional practice. May be known as job-shadowing, an internship or a learnership.	Workplace learning can stretch from a few weeks to a few years. Can be strongly or weakly integrated into the academic learning programme. The workplace is considered a place of learning where model practice is demonstrated.

WIL is essentially an educational construct. According to Engel-Hills et al.'s (2010) it is predicated on the 'front-end model of learning' and then tries to bolt on some exposure to work in order to

contextualise the context-free, supposed universal 'theory'. Hence it defines and describes WIL largely in terms of that paradigm.

8.2 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to unpack the WIL component to inform the Diploma and Degree in ECCE. In order to do this we present WIL information from literature as well as case studies from an HEI, NPO and TVET college. The case studies raise issues for consideration for the design of the WIL component for the Diploma and Degree in ECCE.

8.3 Work experience

In the working world WIL operates in a different paradigm. It is primarily a social process. As Jay Cross (2007:226) described in his work on informal learning: Work = learning; Learning = Work. Work Integrated Learning is the term given to an activity or programme that integrates academic learning with its application in the workplace. The practice may be real or simulated and can occur in the workplace, at the university, online or face-to-face. Vorwerk (2009, 2012), in his description of WIL on work experience sees it as being the fundamental learning modality. If one focuses on how people engage with work, from the novice towards becoming proficient (e.g. Dreyfus', 2004, five-level model of skill acquisition) then a different conception of learning emerges. There is a shift from being a consumer of pre-packaged information to becoming:

- an observer, relying on using the senses to acquire information;
- a participant in a process of producing goods and services;
- a producer of goods and services.

8.4 The importance of WIL

First and foremost, WIL is very significant for student development as it helps students obtain experience that is associated with their qualification while enhancing their learning. The effect of WIL is reiterated by different studies, and they all agree on the fact that WIL programmes develop students' competencies (Arnold et al., 1999:43). Other studies have also linked WIL with improved academic performance (Hughes & Moore, 1999:12). Without the WIL experience, it

can be difficult for teachers to link their theoretical knowledge with the actual classroom context. Additionally, there are considerable benefits for students in WIL. Dressler and Keeling (2004:225), found that WIL improve student confidence, increases discipline thinking; improves learning; takes responsibility for learning, improves learning how to learn; improves problem-solving; analytical thinking; improves performance in the classroom, increases GPA, and increases commitment to educational goals. The Southern Cross University also agrees with these benefits and further highlights the following benefits for student teachers:

- Career gains: up-skilling and/or career change for older workers, work readiness for youth, direct recruitment into employment, networking.
- Academic gains: enhanced critical thinking and generic skills (due to the high levels of student engagement generated by active learning), enhanced disciplinary understanding through application of concepts and observation of skilled practitioners, enhanced problem solving skills.
- Personal gains: clarity regarding career preferences, professionalism and professional identity development, communication, time management, and other soft skills development.

CHE (2011) reiterates some of the many advantages for students who engage in WIL as follows:

- academic benefits, such as improved general academic performance, enhancement of interdisciplinary thinking, increased motivation to learn;
- personal benefits, such as increased communication skills, team work, leadership and cooperation,
- career benefits, for example, career clarification, professional identity, increased employment opportunities and salaries, development of positive work values and ethics; and
- skills development, including increased competence and increased technical knowledge and skill.

One of the HEIs in the PIECCE research project had a clear indication of why WIL is important and this has been adjusted to address the needs of the ECCE practicum in the following ways:

- To bring students into contact with the practice of teaching from an educational and care perspective.

- To provide students with the opportunity to practise the various roles of the teacher in an authentic ECCE sites.
- To provide opportunities to students to experience ECCE sites in different social contexts.
- To give students the opportunity to witness experienced teachers' teaching and ECCE activities.
- To give students the opportunity to plan lessons in context and as aspirant teachers to conduct classes and mediate learning opportunities.
- To give students the opportunity to make independent decisions with regard to the choice of suitable learning content, the resources that can be used, as well as teaching and assessment methods.
- To give students the opportunity to correctly execute a number of tasks, such as using appropriate pedagogies and authentic assessment under the guidance of experienced teachers.
- To give students the opportunity to participate in extra and co-curricular activities.
- To create opportunities in which students' knowledge, competencies and attitudes can be assessed in practice.
- To give students the opportunity to reflect on their experiences during the practicum.

Windschitl (2002), as cited by Du Plessis (2010:209), shares the same sentiment by stating that the following activities encourage meaningful learning:

- Students' ideas and experiences relating to key topics such as lesson plans, teaching media and assessment criteria are elicited, followed by the fashioning of learning situations which help students elaborate on or restructure their current knowledge;
- Students are given ample opportunity to engage in complex, meaningful, problem-based activities, such as designing lesson plans during the teaching practice periods at schools;
- Students receive external support in the form of coaching from supervisor teachers/mentors, as well as hints, feedback, models and reminders;
- Students work collaboratively. They are encouraged to engage in task oriented dialogue with one another;

- When planning and presenting lessons, students are asked to apply knowledge in diverse and authentic contexts to explain ideas, interpret texts, predict phenomena and construct arguments based on evidence, rather than to focus on the acquisition of predetermined 'right answers';
- Supervisor teachers/mentors employ a variety of assessment strategies to understand how students' ideas are evolving, and to give feedback on the processes and products of their thinking.

The above advantages of WIL show that although WIL cannot be an instant solution to transformation in terms of high skills, nor the lack of competitiveness in the working environment, it does play a pivotal role with regard to graduates' readiness upon entering the world of work (CHE, 2011).

8.5 Case study 1: The WIL component at an HEI

What follows is a detailed description of how one of the HEIs participating in this research project, conducts WIL for a Diploma in Grade R. To support students in this opportunity to learn in and from practice, students receive tutorial notes, which should be used in conjunction with a study guide. Students are strongly advised to attend a WIL orientation that will be presented via a scheduled whiteboard presentation. Furthermore the student must prepare for this session by studying the respective WIL tasks and instructions and identify problem areas. During the whiteboard presentation students have the opportunity to discuss and ask questions in preparation for their WIL experience.

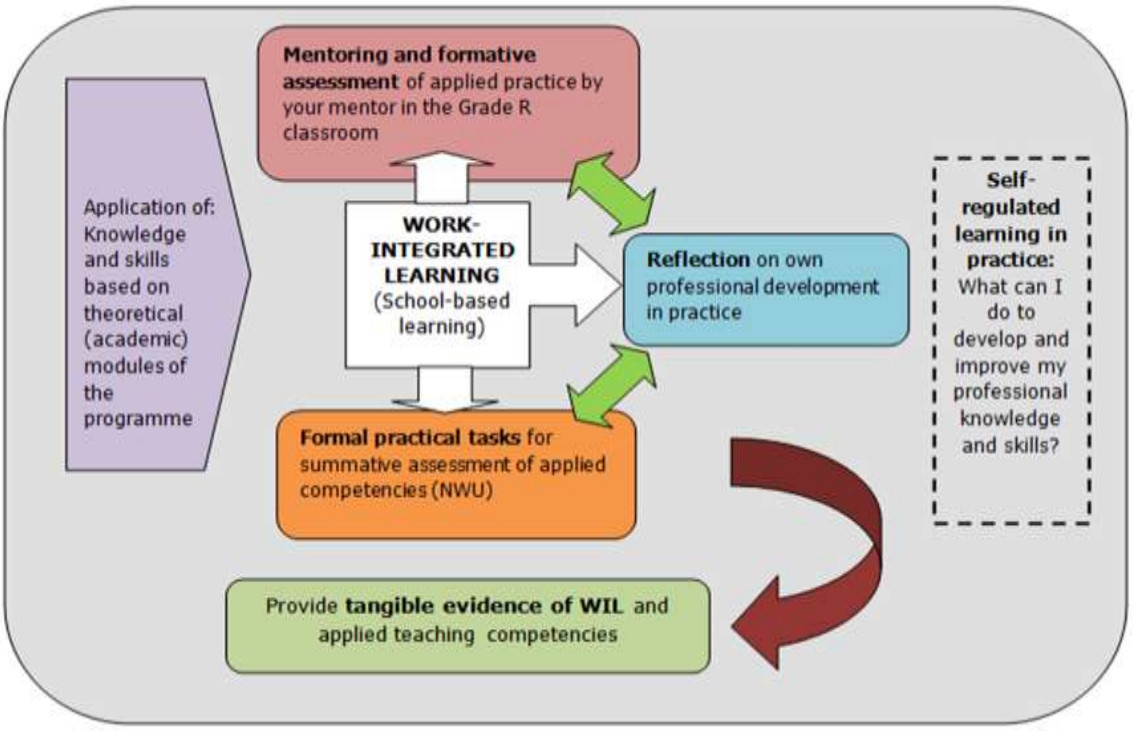


Figure 8.1: What does an HEI WIL look like?

WIL is implemented in an integrated way within the Diploma in Grade R teaching (Fig. 8.1). Students have to apply their knowledge and skills attained through the academic modules together with knowledge and skills mastered from and in practice, while guided by a professional mentor in the field of Grade R education. A study guide guides students in the implementation of informal and formal practical tasks, as well as reflective learning to develop an increasingly self-regulated teaching practice. Assessment of WIL by mentors and academic staff is based on tangible proof of applied competencies in the form of a portfolio.

A portfolio is generally defined as a purposeful collection of a student's work reflecting efforts and achievements in one or more areas, as well as evidence of self-reflection. Portfolios can also be seen as a mechanism designed in order to evaluate performance in relation to external evaluation requirements, and for exploring feelings, values, beliefs and dispositions, collected over time. The value of a portfolio to support the development of reflective thinking on practical teaching matters has been documented by various researchers (Orland-Barak, 2005). Williams et al. (2003) viewed the portfolio as one tool that can be used to 'house' a variety of authentic

assessments. Candidates can demonstrate their knowledge and skills as effective teachers through the use of actual products that they develop in classroom settings (e.g., lesson plans, instructional units, learner work examples, classroom management plans, etc.).

Orland-Barak (2005) referred to research findings indicating that the implementation of portfolios in teacher education programmes enhances teaching practice by providing opportunity for uncovering strengths and weaknesses in teacher-students' performance (Redman, 1994; Smith & Tillema, 1998); developing competence awareness (Topping, 1998); providing evidence of achievement in learning to teach (Loughran & Corrigan, 1995), and promoting reflective practice (Laboskey, 1994; Borko et al., 1997; Bain et al., 1993).

8.5.1 *The role players*

According to an HEI's Faculty of Education Sciences WIL manual (2015), WIL is compulsory for all Diploma in Grade R Teaching, B.Ed. and PGCE students who are registered in the Faculty of Educational Sciences and must be successfully completed before a Diploma, B.Ed. Degree or the PGCE can be awarded. However, since WIL is a partnership between the student, the school, and the university, there are different role players as well. Particularly because "WIL is based on the principle that learning should be demonstrated to be appropriate for a qualification and should be assessed wherever it takes place or is provided" (Engel-Hills et al. 2010). These role players include: the practicum leader, practicum coordinator, mentor, and class teacher. All these people have specific roles and a collective responsibility to maximise the students' WIL experience.

8.5.2 *The student*

One of the most important things for students during WIL is their WIL portfolio, which is a personal document in which their growth, learning and development are reflected. Among other things the student should:

• Be in the classroom of the allocated class teacher at all times, even when the teacher is busy with other subject classes.

• Make the learner first priority – strive for excellence and ensure that conduct is exemplary.

• Dress like a professional and behave like a professional

• Familiarity with class teacher's class rules and time-table is essential

• Offer assistance to sharpen knowledge and skills

• Be well prepared at all time.

• Be punctual at all time and offer timeous notification if attendance is an issue.

• Be mindful of the use of corporal punishment and all behaviour management strategies should be discussed with the class teacher.

• Be consistent and clear.

• Treat all documents as official – complete them fully, neatly and hand in in time.

• Take advantage of the opportunity to observe lessons in subjects other than your own, but get permission to attend first.

• Thank the teacher with whom they are placed.

• Fully participate in the extra and co-curricular activities of the school.

8.5.3 *The practicum leader*

Practicum leaders contact the principal before the school closes for the vacation to find out on what day and time the students must report in the next term. The meeting time and other details must then be communicated to the members of the group of teaching students. Practicum leaders meet the students at the entrance to the school and then introduce them to the principal and the practicum coordinator.

• Practicum leaders are responsible for keeping a general attendance register, but must also make sure that each student also keeps their own attendance register on a daily basis.

• Any problems with students must be immediately sorted out with the practicum coordinator at school. Any serious misconduct by students must be reported to the WIL office.

• The time-table for visiting lecturers is drawn up by the practicum leader and checked by the practicum coordinator before it is sent to the relevant lecturer.

• The lesson assessment times must be communicated to the relevant lecturer 48 hours in advance of the specific day by SMS, e-mail or telephone.

• Practicum leaders meet the lecturer at the school entrance and introduce them to the principal and/or practicum coordinator, if possible.

• The students who is to give the first lesson accompanies the lecturer to the class for the first lesson.

• Practicum leaders or the practicum coordinator take leave of the lecturer as soon as the last reflection has been completed.

• Practicum leaders must provide the required documents, the general attendance register and the practicum leader's report to the WIL office by the closing date.

8.5.4 *The practicum coordinator*

The practicum coordinator serves as the contact person with the staff of the WIL office. They and/or the principal receive the necessary communications from the WIL office and act on them accordingly. They, in cooperation with the principal, deal with the placement of the students with specific experienced staff members.

• They also receive the students on their arrival at the school and they are responsible for all arrangements in the school with regard to the students.

• They monitor the students' assimilation into the school and ensure that the communication and cooperation between student and class teacher are functioning satisfactorily.

• They assist the practicum leaders with their arrangements for visiting lecturers.

- They serve as advisors for students in co-operation with the school principal, in all matters that the class teacher cannot address and with any disciplinary problems with students.

• All relevant documentation of the students at the end of the WIL period must be signed off and stamped by the practicum coordinator before the students depart from the school.

The above case study demonstrates that WIL is a complex process involving multiple parties in order to ensure a streamlined process. There are built in checks-and-balances which suggests that the training institution is aware that their students/practitioners are guests in the schools or ECD centres.

8.5.5 *Mentoring*

An additional and fundamental aspect of WIL is mentoring. The Diploma in Grade R case study supports the mentoring model and therefore provides mentor-assisted tasks and also trains mentors in ways to assist the beginner-teacher in WIL and to guide the teacher-student in reflective teaching. Mentoring is defined by Kupila (2017) as follows: "Promoting an individual's awareness and refinement of his/her own professional development by providing and recommending structured opportunities for reflection and observation".

Synonyms for the word mentor include terms, such as advisor, counsellor, tutor, guide, teacher, guru. A mentor should adhere to all these roles by guiding the teacher-student in attaining practice-based competencies through advising, counselling and tutoring. Mentorship, however, involves more than guiding teacher-students through learning outcomes and skills, but extends to providing strong and continuous emotional support. Good mentorship involves helping beginner-teachers work effectively within the school context. A mentor should have ample experience of Grade R teaching and learning and be able to give professional guidance while developing applied competencies within the Grade R context. Good mentors are not only sure of their own judgments regarding effective Grade R teaching and learning but should also be open and responsive to the opinions of others. Teachers have important things to learn from each other, from parents, from learners and also from other community members, about the particular children they teach and about ways to teach them. Mentors therefore have to provide guidance in ways sensitive to the context of the school, as well as the community.

The mentor will not only provide the teacher-student with valuable feedback to support his/her professional development, but the mentor will also be expected to report to the HEI regarding the progress and development of the teacher-student's applied teaching competencies during the WIL process. The WIL reports form part of the teacher-student's portfolio in the Diploma in Grade R Teaching and accumulate to a final WIL mark. The summative assessment of the WIL is the responsibility of the HEI. Mentor support should actually not stop after this qualification has been attained but should form part of professional teaching whereby each teacher identifies a mentor that can help to keep him/her accountable for the teaching and learning that takes place in his/her classrooms. A professional and self-regulated teacher will also extend mentorship by allowing the entire school community to act as mentors. We can all learn from one another and should be open to input from colleagues, parents and even learners. A beginner-teacher or teacher-student should be assured of the support of colleagues and should be able to ask for assistance and guidance from experienced teachers whenever necessary.

The HEI undertakes to ensure that suitably qualified and experienced workplace mentors are appointed that would enable students to recognise their strengths and weaknesses in their work, to develop existing and new abilities, and to gain knowledge of work practices. The partner school's principal identifies programme-specific mentors in his/her school as part of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) and in accordance with the HEI's criteria for the appointment of mentors. These mentors will be trained by the HEI's lecturers. An example of a checklist for mentors is given in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2: An example of a checklist for mentors

Criteria	Check	☑	☒
Appropriate qualification	Does the person have an appropriate teaching and professional qualification?		
Substantial experience within the context of a specific programme	Years' experience in a particular phase and/or subject?		
Good supporting skills (mentor not a tormentor!)	Does the person have the kind of professional attitude that will ensure professional mentoring of WIL?		
Assessment and administration skills	Will the mentor be able to assess and support teaching competencies through observations, such as lesson planning and implementation, administrative skills, etc.? (Are there any demographic or time constraints?)		
Professional role model	Is the person appropriate as a role model for teacher students?		
Professional conduct	Does this person uphold professional conduct regarding all facets of education?		

Two types of mentor are applicable for implementing the WIL programme. Firstly, a generalist mentor is appointed to oversee the WIL programme at a school, to supervise and to assess the phase-specific and general didactic aspects. Furthermore, the role of the generalist mentor entails amongst other aspects the responsibility for WIL administration at school, to coordinate, to support the students according to the HEI's requirements and to provide guidance, for example, in portfolio compilation. Secondly, a specialist mentor is appointed as an expert professional for subject specific/phase-specific guidance, supervision and assessment. An assessment report completed by the mentor should be submitted with each assessment task as set out in each WIL component. These reports and assessment forms can be found in the WIL admin booklet.

Training of mentors is compulsory and is offered by the HEI as an accredited (SAQA approved) short learning programme. A database of all accredited mentors is established and maintained by the HEI's WIL office. Regional study centres and the centre coordinators are utilised for this purpose to serve partner schools in a specific cluster. The mentor short learning programme is presented by approved and qualified trainers. Comprehensive and programme related study material is provided for the mentoring training. The successful completion of the mentor training led to the acknowledgement of approved mentor status for this HEI's WIL programmes. The mentors receive a certificate after completion of the mentor short learning programme as proof of mentor status.

Continuous support is provided by the faculty's WIL office to the regional study centre coordinators and facilitators, the school principal, mentors, educators and students. Support is provided by means of a comprehensive WIL programme manual and study guide, open access to a dedicated WIL official, as well as a call centre, electronic learning management platforms (eFundi), while mentors, educators and students have full access via telephone and e-mail to the qualification programme leader, regional study centre coordinator and HEI lecturers. Therefore support from the HEI lecturers is provided through tutorial notes, whiteboard sessions, vacation schools, telephone, e-mail and face-to-face contact if necessary. No diploma can be presented to any student who has not completed the WIL as set out in the HEI's study guide.

The term 'best practice' suggests an opportunity for a student/practitioner to observe and engage with mentors or teacher mentors who are considered experts in their field. It would be expected that training institutions should expose their students/practitioners to the aforementioned best practice in order to assist the student/practitioner in either upskilling a current pedagogy or growing a new set of skills. Best practice is additionally relevant in the choice of schools at which students may conduct WIL as the opportunity to observe or benefit from best practice can be directly linked to where the student/practitioner is placed for their period of WIL. This therefore raises the question of who chooses the school, how easy it is to gain access to schools and the relevancy of exposure to a variety of contexts for teaching and learning. As some

of the participants in this research project, are in-service practitioners, they do not have a choice in their context for teaching and may therefore need the opportunity to visit other ECD centres or schools to observe best practice.

8.5.6 *Reflection*

The development and application of reflective learning strategies will instil in teachers the tendency towards a *reflective teaching practice*, which is often viewed as the most important characteristic of an expert teacher. Effective and meaningful learning, theoretical and practical, is always nestled in reflective learning. (See Fig. 8.2)

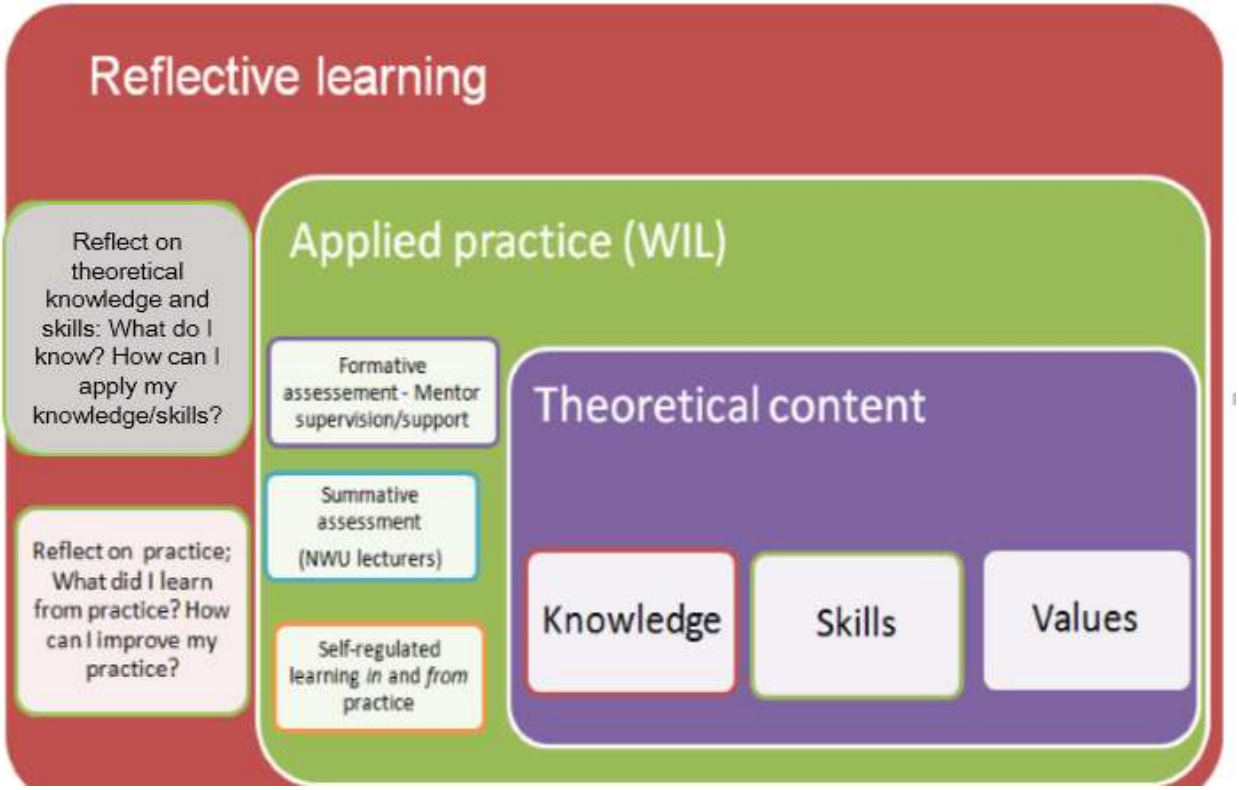


Figure 8.2: Reflective learning

Students thus have to continuously reflect on learning through theory (academic modules), as well as on learning *in* and *from* practice. Research shows that reflective learning by teachers can make a lasting impact on their teaching practice.

The reflective portfolio forms part of the Portfolio of Evidence (PoE) and is usually a set of assignments that are specifically designed to encourage reflection on the part of the student/practitioner. For example, a student may be asked to reflect and write a short piece on their early experience of learning to read. The purpose behind such an activity would be for the student to understand their attitude towards teaching reading and what their learners might be experiencing. According to Henderson, Napan and Monteiro (2004) reflection can be described as consciously thinking about and analysing what one has done (or is doing). Reflective learning encourages deeper learning, and offers a relevant framework for the development of professionals who will be lifelong learners, committed to continuous improvement of their practice (Henderson, Napan & Monteiro, 2004). Reflection is the process that includes a series of steps, including reviewing, reconstructing, re-enacting, and critically analysing one's teaching in order to improve. Reflection is a means for reliving and recapturing experience in order to make sense of it, to learn from it, and to develop new understandings and appreciations (Knapp, 1993 as cited by Rahima & Donald, 1996). The root of the word reflection comes from the Latin reflectere, which means 'to bend back'. As a mirror reflects a physical image, so does reflection as a thought process reveal to us aspects of our experience that might have remained hidden had we not taken the time to consider them. Whether students apply reflective thinking to practical teaching matters, problems in the midst of teaching, or institutional goals and criteria, conscious reflection begins with a focus on experience (Rahima & Donald, 1996:64).

A. *Reflection on practice*: You need to reflect on each of the WIL days in practice

B. *Reflection on theory* (academic modules of the semester approach their teaching.

Reflection as a term is used in a number of different ways by different authors. We take our definition from Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985:19) as "a generic term for those intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to new understandings and appreciations". Boud et al. (1985) developed a three-stage model of the reflection process focusing on: returning to the experience, attending to feelings connected with the experience and re-evaluating the experience through recognizing implications and

outcomes. This model has subsequently been extended into a model for facilitating learning from experience (Boud, Cohen & Walker, 1993). The essence of this model is that learning from experience can be enhanced through both reflection in action (reflection, which occurs in the midst of experience), and through reflection after an event (reflection on action). Both forms of reflection can be introduced into courses, though in different ways (Martin & Hughes, 2009:12).

As research clearly indicates the value of reflection on teachers' knowledge and skills regarding their practice, students need to reflect on a daily and continuous basis on their professional development through their programme of study. Although students will reflect on practice after their daily teaching experience, they should try to also remember and note down their reflections in practice, which may have played a role in the way they managed a teaching/learning experience or any aspect of their education.

8.5.7. *Evidence of teaching competencies*

Students need to present tangible evidence of professional teaching competencies. Various ways whereby you need to present tangible evidence of the following:

- knowledge and understanding of ECCE teaching and learning, e.g. the planning and implementing of learning experiences;
- conducting developmentally appropriate assessment of 0-4 year old learners' progress and development;
- knowledge of the ECCE teacher's roles and how to fulfil each of the these roles;
- personal qualities, e.g. the ability to collaborate with colleagues and the parents in the best interests of the learners;
- the ability to reflect on own professional development and skills;
- the ability to apply knowledge and an understanding of effective and ethical ECCE practice; and
- creating a disciplined but learner-centred ECCE environment.

Evidence is the tangible proof that is produced by individuals (or about them) in order to demonstrate competence in respect of defined outcomes. The evidence is used as a basis for making judgements about the competence of individuals in relation to outcomes described in unit standards, qualifications or other performance standards. Therefore there must be a direct relationship between the evidence and the outcomes. Evidence can be provided in a variety of ways, on condition that the evidence presented is tangible and perceivable with the senses. SAQA describes the difference between the three main types of evidence (Oct. 2001:38-39). (See Table 8.3).

Table 8.3: Three main types of evidence

DIRECT EVIDENCE	**INDIRECT EVIDENCE**	**HISTORICAL EVIDENCE**
● This is actual evidence produced by the candidate. ● This is the most valid and authentic evidence and should be the primary source of evidence. ● This is particularly valuable if the assessor works with the candidate on a daily basis e.g. a mentor.	● This is evidence produced about the candidate by a third party, other than the assessor. ● It can be used to verify the authenticity of other forms of evidence. ● Witnesses must be familiar with the standards required and able to comment authoritatively on the candidate's performance.	● It is evidence of what the candidate was capable of doing in the past. ● It is the least reliable, because it does not guarantee or prove current competence. ● It usually needs to be checked for authenticity and supplemented by an assessment of current competence.
Examples: ● -Direct observation of tasks and activities ● Oral or written answers to questions ● Evaluation of products or output	**Examples:** ● Testimony from colleagues and supervisors ● Work completed previously ● Training records ● Customer ratings	**Examples:** ● Previously completed products and portfolios ● Performance appraisals ● Certificates and qualifications ● Medals, prizes and testimonials

8.6. **Case study 2: The WIL component at a NPO**

As training of practitioners in the ECD sector has resided in the NPO sector over a number of years prior to HEIs and TVETs taking up the mantle, it is appropriate to examine how WIL is implemented. The following is an overview of the NPO implementation model specific to WIL.

Generally the practice is that the NPOs have some kind of articulation of how they blend theory and practice teaching for the ECD learners. Most NPOs follow an accredited curriculum with the ETDP SETA which tends to structure a modular training that is interfaced with practical chunks of work experience gained. In many respects this type of interface is similar, at least in part, to the kind that Christoph Vorwerk (2014:53) described in the literature review above. The approach is geared to teach the learner to 'do' ECD rather than to simply 'know' ECD. However, despite the good intention, it is a weakness that specific WIL policies are not developed to any degree of depth within organisations. It is suffice to say that many do have standard operation procedures in addressing practical work experience as this is often a requirement of the ETDP SETA verification protocol.

8.6.1 *The NPO WIL experience*

Generally the ECD NPO mostly comes from a philosophy of developmental coaching and mentorship. This has been necessitated by the fact that the history of ECD teaching and learning as well as service delivery comes from a background of working with the most disadvantaged and marginalised (often women) and least literate population of SA. The ECD programmes offered by all NPOs have a significant tilt towards a strong component of showing, coaching and supporting alongside the theoretical teaching. In a systemic review of ECD working conditions for over 28 countries, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2015) found that Long-term CPD interventions integrated into practice, such as pedagogical guidance and coaching in reflection groups, have proved effective in very different contexts – in countries with a well- established system of ECCE provisions and a high level of qualification requirements for the practitioners, but also as in countries with poorly subsidised ECCE systems and low qualification requirements. Thus, independent of the kind of ECCE system, long-term

pedagogical support to staff by specialised coaches or counsellors in reflection groups was found effective in enhancing the quality of ECEC services, as well as in improving children's outcomes.

WIL is one aspect of the NPOs commitment to the concept of real world learning. Many courses and qualifications that are offered by the NPOs offer WIL as an opportunity for academic and practice-based professional learning to occur together within a work environment as part of the course of study. In some organisations this is referred to as in-service training. The mix or balance between contact sessions (theoretical teaching) and in practice (filed application or practical experience) differs greatly from organisation to organisation. Also it's noted that within organisations, this time is disaggregated according to the type of course for example accredited vs non accredited ECD courses. In other words, each course varies in relation to the nature of the ECD intervention required.

Many NPOs consider work experience in the sector or community-based learning to be WIL. By and large this activity is covered by providing learning support to the practitioner during the learning activity. The work integrated learning forms a part of a course. Learning support for work experience includes the following:

- interaction with the practitioner which includes site visits and practice observations as well as assessments;
- organisation of placements;
- ongoing monitoring of playgroup work and progress; and
- assessment of practitioners and playgroup facilitators learning and performance during the learning activity.

Table 8.4: Summary of models of WIL in NPOs.

	Contact Learning	Onsite Support	Evidence Generation
NQF Level 4 &5	Residential training one week per month during which they cover one theoretical module. They then go back to their places of work to implement this theory and complete set assignments.	Additional structured on-site visits at the practitioner's places of work for support, assessment and observation	Most RTOs have an accredited curriculum they follow and which requires the learners to develop a portfolio of evidence that blends both practical and theoretical learning Portfolio of Evidence compilation, Moderation, Verification from ETDP SETA
Short & Skills Courses	Facilitators attend and an initial week of orientation to ECD training which can be residential Stronger emphasis placed on experiential learning(playgroups, Home Visiting programmes) under guidance of mentors and clusters of practitioners	Thereafter they work as ECD facilitators in their communities and come back for one day of training every month. (Most of these play facilitators have already finished their L4 certificate, but not all of them)	Most RTOs don't have a POE in place for the short courses although there is evidence of extensive contact by coaches and mentors
Other types of learner support	There are some organisations (not very many) that have modified the practical field work into role play or simulations (e.g. demonstrations of practical experiences (e.g. practitioners acting out play activities or case studies, and drawing principles from their experiences). Although site visits are mainly used for assessment.		

8.6.2 *Administrative support for WIL in the NPO sector*

Many organisations depend on the training staff to organise and arrange WIL with their students. Given the human resources within NGOs, it is not practical to have a dedicated WIL officer. Although what does tend to happen is that there is often administrative staff that support the trainer with training plans as well as field support plans. As alluded to earlier the model that many NPOs use is that of an in-service approach so the workplace is already defined because the practitioner is employed there.

Training organisations are now ensuring that they enforce clearance as per provisions of the Children's Act 38 of 2005. The empirical data on Survey 1 showed that only 40% of staff indicated that they were cleared as a person suitable to work with children and 60% were unsure if their students/practitioners had been cleared. This suggests that there is a lack of awareness of the importance of obtaining clearance and possibly of informing students/practitioners of the Act.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy to mention that the majority of students/practitioners training through an NPO, are already in the employment of ECD centres that recruited them sometimes without a relevant qualification. As most NPOs adopt an approach of having an orientation week at the beginning of their training programmes perhaps it is appropriate to include in this week the importance of the Children's Act and obtaining clearance. This is a valuable period of time in which topics such as assessment, site visits, PoEs and the general expectations of the training programme, are covered.

8.6.3 *Institutional capacity*

Many NPOs use standardised assessment templates aligned to the qualification they are registered to train. In many cases the same trainer who trains the practitioners is also the one that goes out to evaluate the practical work and to observe the practitioner in practice. This set up places a lot of strain on the NPOs capacity and thus those who do this will spend an incredible amount of time on the site support and monitoring visits which in turn can limit the NPOs capacity to train and increase the costs attached. There is no evidence of a standalone evaluation responsibility within NPOs. However, the advantage is that the ECD trainer knows what they are looking for and therefore the practitioner really benefits from the visit of the trainer because the trainer is an expert themselves in ECD. The onsite support visit is an intensely structured process that utilises set templates and documents for recording progress or lack thereof.

Example: Illustrating NPO process course structure WIL integration

Table 8.5: Matching processes

Step 1	Matching process:
	• Community stakeholder engagement to disseminate information about the learning programme and invite applications.
Step 2	• Applications in writing or via community meeting.
Step 3	• Placement assessment, placement and registration administration
Step 4	• 1 day learner orientation, guidance and support (varies depending with course).
	• 3 days of learner administration (including possible contracts and compliance forms for working in the ECD sector e.g. police clearance.
	Training skills programme formally commences:

Step 5	5 days of theory learning block for clustered and sequenced Module 1 related to the following: ● Work with families and communities to support Early Childhood Development
	15 days of experiential learning working in the Playgroup programme under guidance of mentor and coaches.
	Assessment of Module 1 theory and practice.
Step 6	5 days of theory learning block for clustered and sequenced Module 2 related to the following: ● Prepare resources and set up the environment to support the development of babies, toddlers and young children ● Interact with babies, toddlers and young children
	45 days of experiential learning working in Playgroup programme under guidance of mentor and coaches.
	Assessment of Module 2 theory and practice.
	Feedback on assessment for module 1 (Remediation as required)
Step 7	Final exit assessment presentations
Step 8	Training administration (including QA admin, Portfolio of Evidence compilation, Moderation, Verification and Statements of Results from SETA)
Step 9	Certification ceremony

Unlike HEIs, the NPO training courses are primarily SETA accredited which has an impact on delivery as the SETA is problematic and this causes delays in providing certificates for newly qualified practitioners. What is evident from the above table is that considerable effort is put into training practitioners and this should not be hampered by delays in obtaining final certificates.

8.7 Case **study 3: The WIL component at a TVET**

A Collaboration between the Academic and Job Placement Departments Incorporates;

- Theory content covered in the classroom;
- Practical components done in the workshop/SIM/kitchen/restaurant;
- Exposure to real life workplace based experience (WBE); Responsibility:
- Programme Head and Academic Manager

Support from Job Placement Team

- National N Diploma Students are placed in the workplace to complete a compulsory component of work-based exposure or practical in order to be awarded the full Diploma qualification. This is called in-service training

Responsibility: Job Placement

Support from Programme Head

- Students who are finished a qualification and do not have an additional practical component are assisted with placement into permanent employment.

  Responsibility: Job Placement

  Support from Programme Head

Table 8.6: Structures and Resources needed to implement WIL at TVET Colleges

Academic Management	**Programme Heads for each academic stream**	**Student Support and Job Placement (JPO's allocated to each specific academic stream)**	**Partnerships and Linkages Manager**
Deputy Principal Education and Training with Academic Heads	Each stream had a Programme Head (e.g. Hospitality, Electrical, Business Management, Educare etc. …..)	Student Support Manager and team of 5 Job Placement Officers (JPO's) specialising in one particular academic stream	Funding Sourcing New Projects Contact with Companies Contact with Industry
SUPPORT PROVIDED	**SUPPORT PROVIDED**	**SUPPORT PROVIDED**	**SUPPORT PROVIDED**
Provide support in setting targets, strategic focus and monitoring and evaluation Site Visit Logbooks	Timetables Data Company Contacts Site Visits Programme Specific needs	Placement Services Job readiness Company Contacts Site Visits Statistics	Links with industry Information on scarce skills

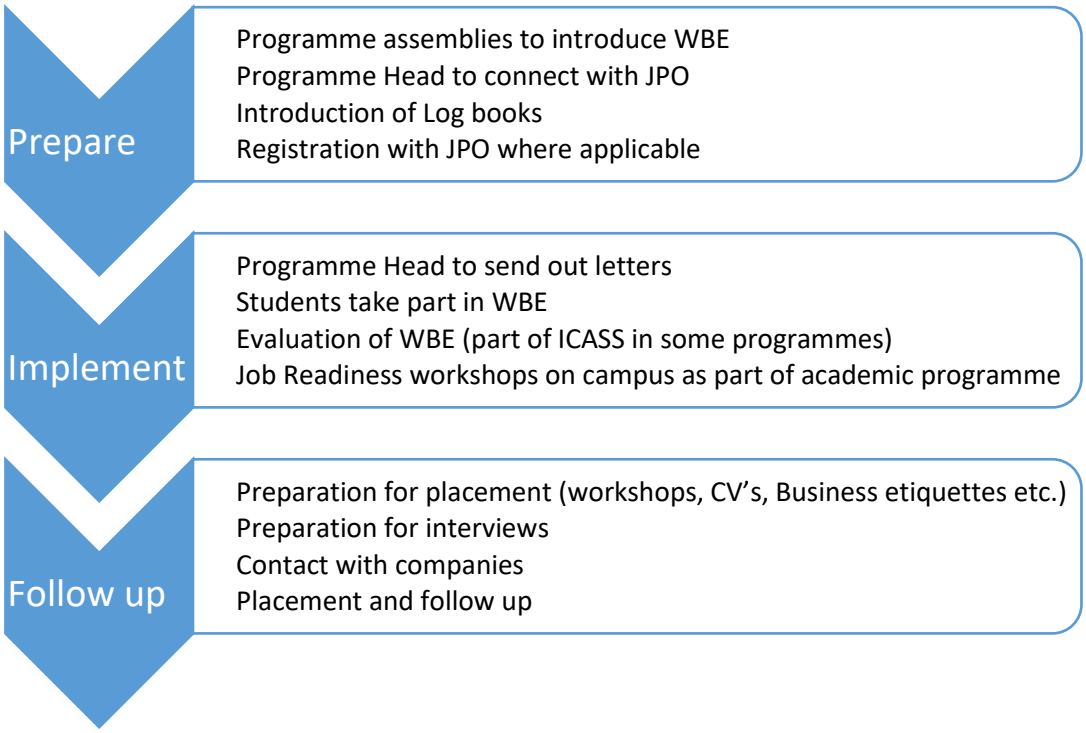
8.7.1 *The approach to WIL at TVET Colleges*

This incorporates the theory content covered in the classroom with the practical components done in the workshop/SIM/kitchen/restaurant as well as the exposure to real life workplace based experience (WBE). Once a student has completed his or her studies there are TWO Placement Options.

Table 8.7: Placement Options

Students are placed in the workplace to complete a compulsory component of work based exposure or practical in order to be awarded the full qualification (e.g. N6 National Diploma). This is called in-service training Responsibility: Job Placement Support from Programme Head	Students who are finished a qualification that does not have an additional practical component are assisted with placement into permanent employment. Responsibility: Job Placement Support from Programme Head

Process to introduce students to WBE (Work place based exposure during the qualification and after theoretical component).



It is not only the programme relevant skills that count! What else is needed? Putting the theory into practice; simulated projects to simulate the real workplace; problem-solving and collaborating; applying knowledge within the real world working environment; problem solving and negotiation skills; developing social relationships; conflict management; leadership and

motivation; ability to deal with stress and emotional experiences; improved communication (written and oral) and solving real life problems with input from industry.

8.7.2 *Lecturer placement in the workplace*

Lecturer placement is part of the strategic planning at the end of each year for the next year. Targets are set globally for the college and then translated into a campus total. Staff engage in a variety of placements including a full five day placement, day visits to industry and visiting students in industry. The success of the student WBE programme showed the necessity for this to be linked to a lecturer placement programme as well. Students come back from industry fired up at what they have seen. It becomes critical that staff then also visit the industry to be able to bring these "new elements" into the classroom.

Table 8.8: WIL within Education studies

PROGRAMME STEAM	**WIL COMPOENT**
NATIONAL CERTIFICATE VOCATIONAL (NCV)	A MINIMUM OF 5 DAYS PER ANNUM (LIMITED WIL EXPOSURE)
REPORT 191 (NATED) CERTIFICATES N4 – N6	IN-SERVICE MODEL Students spend 4 days a week in contact sessions and 1 day a week at their sites (translates to approx. 55 days during an 18 month period) Students also complete block weeks at sites during block week (minimum of 1 week)
REPORT 191 (NATED) NATIONAL N DIPLOMA	IN-SERVICE MODEL Students complete 18 moths of in-service training
OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATES	IN-SERVICE MODEL Students are site based and spend one day a week in contact sessions Block week training arranged during breaks

8.8 **Standards for WIL experience**

The table below is a resource that can be used to develop ideas on shaping a developmental experience for students from entry to exit level. The standards of achievement help to think about levels of complexity and pacing of learning to reach the exit level outcomes.

Student Teacher Standards

This document makes use of the basic competences of a beginner teacher (MRTEQ – Appendix C) as well as wording and concepts from the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) For School—Based Educators. It also considers the types of learning for teaching as set out in MRTEQ and is arranged according to the 11 competencies for beginning teachers in MRTEQ.

Competency-based approach underlain by Millers' pyramid of competence

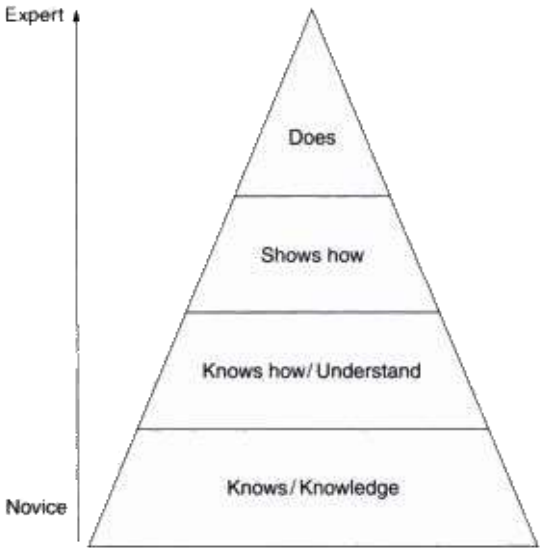
Rating Scale
Level 1: Still developing. This level of performance does not meet minimum expectations and requires urgent interventions and support.

Level 2: Satisfies minimum expectations. This level of performance is acceptable and is in line with minimum expectations, but development and support are still required.

Level 3: Transcends minimum requirements. Performance is good and meets expectations, but some areas are still in need of development and support.

Level 4: Exemplary performance. Performance is outstanding and exceeds expectations. Although performance is excellent, continuous self-development and improvement are advised.

Millers' pyramid of competence



Relevant African epistemologies

Letskeka – Fairness and communality, Ubuntu
Mosana – Ubuntu
Mkabela - African approach to education
Beets & le Grange – Africanisation and assessment

Table 8.9: Unisa BEd and PGCE achievement standards for initial teacher education

	Four levels of performance			
	Still developing	**Satisfies minimum expectations**	**Transcends minimum requirements**	**Exemplary performance**
	Level 1	**Level 2**		
…… …. Student Teacher Competency	**Can mostly be assessed through traditional assessments/ simulations/co-teaching**	**Can be assessed through traditional <u>and</u> supervised practical teaching assessments**	**Level 3 Can be assessed during practical teaching in supervised authentic environments**	**Level 4 Can usually only be assessed in real unsupervised authentic environments**
1. Must have sound subject knowledge (Disciplinary learning) Shuman's categories of content knowledge: subject matter content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge & curricular knowledge. Mazrui's seven pillars of wisdom in integrating indigenous knowledge – tolerance, social justice, etc.				
Acquire and maintain sound subject knowledge.	Academic knowledge about the subject(s) and phase(s) is inaccurate or limited or still being acquired. Unable to apply knowledge effectively in lessons.	Demonstrate academic knowledge of the subject at expected level when teaching. Knowledge is adequate but not comprehensive. Demonstrates only what is required for the lesson.	Demonstrate academic subject knowledge of the subject at a higher level than expected when teaching. Knowledge is comprehensive (has a broader understanding of the subject than only textbook content). Holistic subject knowledge is evident.	Demonstrate academic subject knowledge at an advanced level when teaching. There is evidence of continuous updating, extension and development of subject knowledge through further study, reading and engagement in national or international subject committees.
Understand that different knowledge systems exist and should be accommodated in teaching and learning.	Aware of IKS but do not know how to accommodate this in teaching and learning.	Demonstrate cultural sensitivity/ context conciousness and is able to accommodate different life views and knowledge systems in the classroom to some extent.	Actively encourage the expression of different life views and utilization of different knowledge systems in carefully designed lesson activities.	Expression of different life views and utilization of different knowledge systems are encouraged, planned for, implemented, respected and shared continuously in

				teaching and learning.
2. Know how to teach their subject: select, determine the sequence and pace of content in accordance with both subject and learner needs. (Pedagogical learning). Shulman – PCK, Vygotsky – Socio-cultural learning, Ubuntu values of caring, sharing, dignity, etc., Storytelling, Du Plessis - Context consciousness.				
Select content for subject and learner needs.	Inadequate selection or incorrect selection of content. Selection does not effectively meet teaching or learning needs.	Adequate selection of content. Selection is relevant to teaching and learning needs.	Good selection of content. Selection meets teaching and learning needs. Content leads to meaningful and relevant learning experiences	Good selection of content. Content leads to meaningful and relevant learning experiences where interrelatedness of concepts is clear.
Sequencing and pacing of content	Sequencing and pacing of content within and across lessons does not allow learners to build conceptual understanding of the subject. Setting out of content needs a clearer trajectory. No support of content understanding is evident.	Sequencing and pacing of content within and across lessons is adequate but may not contribute to solid understanding of concepts. Sequencing or pacing may need to be revised. Learners may need a different pace. Learners may need more content support.	Sequencing and pacing of content within and across lessons is good. Clear trajectory of content and pacing that is in accordance with learners' needs.	Sequencing and pacing of content within and across lessons is excellent. Learners are able to build a solid understanding of subject concepts through well-supported content sequencing and pacing.
Teach/facilitate	Aware of all requirements necessary for teaching effectively but needs support to implement and coordinate lesson activities.	Demonstrates a suitable teaching strategy and at least one resource to engage learners and contribute to learning.	Demonstrates varied teaching strategies and resources are employed to effectively engage learners and contribute to learning.	Varied teaching strategies and superb resources that include ICT are employed with complete confidence to effectively engage learners and contribute to learning.
Adapt (adjust or change) teaching when needed.	Aware that sometimes teaching needs to be adapted but is unable to adapt lessons accordingly.	Able to identify when adaptation is needed. Is able to adapt a lesson to a satisfactory degree.	Able to adapt teaching to a range of contexts and for multiple purposes such as	Confidently adapts teaching to a range of contexts and for multiple purposes such as correcting

			correcting misunderstandings.	misunderstandings. Uses alternative strategies to ensure learning for different learning abilities and/or preferences and/or overcoming learning barriers.
3. Know who their learners are and how they learn (Pedagogical learning) Gardner – learning preferences, Vygotsky – Socio-cultural learning, Ubuntu values of caring, sharing, dignity, etc., Du Plessis -Content consciousness.				
Acquire and maintain knowledge about learners and learning	Aware that learners have different abilities at various levels but needs support in catering for these learners.	Demonstrates an activity that is appropriate for the abilities of learners.	Demonstrates a range of activities that are appropriate for the level of learning required and cater to a variety of learning styles.	Demonstrates and uses activities that are appropriate for the abilities of learners.
	Aware that learners have learning preferences but needs support in catering for these learners.	Uses an activity that is associated with a learning preference.	Uses activities that cater to a variety of learning styles.	Develops and uses a range of activities that cater for different learning styles.
	Aware that learners experience barriers to learning but needs support in catering for these learners.	Identifies some barriers to learning among learners in a class and use an activity that caters for these learners.	Facilitates and caters regularly acknowledges and respects individuality and diversity. Caters for barriers to learning.	Identifies a range of learning barriers and can use a range of strategies and alternative learning activities to overcome such barriers. Uses inclusive strategies and promotes respect for individuality and diversity.

4. Communicate effectively in order to mediate learning. Ginott's Congruent Communication Theory' Letsheka – Ubuntu values				
Classroom communication	Struggles to communicate effectively. Needs to develop spoken and written confidence in a classroom. Needs guidance with re-explaining concepts in a different way. Needs guidance with verbal, non-verbal or written classroom communication.	Communicates sufficiently to mediate learning to most learners. Is able to convey the lesson content. Will need support with verbal, non-verbal or written classroom communication. Mostly confident.	Communicates well during the lesson. Learners are motivated and interested. Good verbal, non-verbal and written classroom communication. Is confident.	Excellent communication during the lesson. Is able to captivate learners during the entire lesson. Excellent verbal, non-verbal and written classroom communication. Very confident.
5. Highly developed literacy, numeracy and Information Technology (IT) skills. (Fundamental learning) TPACK				
Literacy	Basic literacy skills necessary for preparing, planning and presenting lessons as well as for general classroom management.	Sufficient literacy skills to cope with preparing, planning and presenting lesson as well as for general classroom management. Many aspects can be improved.	Good literacy skills needed to plan, prepare and present lessons as well as for general classroom management. May need to improve on one or two aspects.	Excellent literacy skills and this is evident in lesson planning, preparation and presentation as well as for general classroom management.
Numeracy	Basic numeracy skills necessary for preparing, planning and presenting lessons as well as for general classroom management.	Sufficient numeracy skills to cope with preparing, planning and presenting lesson as well as for general classroom management. Many aspects can be improved.	Good numeracy skills needed to plan, prepare and present lessons as well as for general classroom management. May need to improve on one or two aspects.	Excellent numeracy skills and this is evident in lesson planning, preparation and presentation as well as for general classroom management**.**

IT	Basic IT skills necessary for preparing, planning and presenting lessons as well as for general classroom management.	Sufficient IT skills to cope with preparing, planning and presenting lesson as well as general classroom management. Many aspects can be improved.	Good IT skills needed to plan, prepare and present lessons as well as general classroom management. May need to improve on one or two aspects.	Excellent IT skills and this is evident in lesson planning, preparation and presentation as well as general classroom management**.**
6. Knowledgeable about the school curriculum; unpack its specialised content; use available resources; plan and design suitable learning. (Disciplinary and Practical learning – Work integrated learning: WIL) **Shukman – Curriculum knowledge, Multiple knowledge systems - IKS**				
Acquire and maintain sound curriculum knowledge	Limited knowledge of curriculum documents for subject(s) and phase(s).	Sufficient knowledge of curriculum topics using CAPS.	Good knowledge of curriculum topics and their aligned with CAPS.	Excellent knowledge of curriculum topics which are aligned with CAPS.
	Knowledge and application of curriculum content is at a basic level (follows textbook only)	Knowledge and application of the curriculum content is at an acceptable level (can situate the lesson within the curriculum)	Knowledge and application of the curriculum content is at a good level. Lessons show clear pathway through the curriculum.	Knowledge and application of the curriculum content shows interrelatedness with other subjects or contexts
Plan teaching	Limited knowledge and evidence of lesson planning strategies.	Can plan a learning experience that engages and interests the learners.	Makes use of a range of active, collaborative and cooperative learning strategies in planning learning events.	Can use and/or develop own strategies for active, collaborative and cooperative strategies in planning learning events.
Prepare resources	Limited knowledge about resources and teaching media, including ICT, that are meant to engage learners in the learning process.	Demonstrates knowledge of a range of resources and teaching media, including ICT, that engage learners in the learning process.	Finds, selects and adapts resources and teaching media, including ICT, that engage learners in the learning process.	Finds, selects, adapts and/or develop resources and teaching media, including ICT that can be used to generate interest and engage learners in the learning process.

	Does not use resources. Does not plan well for using resources.	Use and planning for basic resources is satisfactory.	Demonstrates the use of well-planned appropriate resources to enhance learning	Resources are well planned and available to ensure the smooth flow and enrichment of lesson activities. Resources used support and enhance learning.
7. Understand diversity in the South African Context (Situational learning) Du Plessis- context consciousness, Lave & Wenger – Situated learning, Ubuntu values such as respect, Ways of learning - Letsheka				
The SA Education environment.	Awareness of SA Education system.	Knowledge of how the present education system developed.	Knowledge of the principles and procedures of the present curriculum.	Promotes the goals of attaining social justice, Africanisation of the curriculum and ubuntu through inclusion of different value systems and culturally sensitive teaching.
8. Manage classrooms effectively; ensure a conducive learning environment (Practical learning) Skinner's operant conditioning, Glasser's choice theory, Kohn's student directed learning theory				
School context.	Aware that schools in SA operate in vastly different contexts.	Determines the context of a particular school.	Adapts teaching in accordance with the context of the school to enrich learning despite challenges..	Uses innovative strategies that can overcome challenges in a particular school context that will ensure effective teaching and learning..
	Limited knowledge and understanding of learners' backgrounds (values, living circumstances as well as family and community contexts).	Knowledge and understanding of learners' backgrounds is known.	Knowledge and understanding of learners' backgrounds is used to inform an appropriate general teaching approach.	Knowledge and understanding of learners' backgrounds informs lessons and assessments so that they are meaningful to all learners despite their backgrounds.

Classroom environment.	Aware that teachers must prepare and maintain a safe, inviting and disciplined classroom environment.	Makes use of what is available at a school in a particular context to prepare a classroom for a lesson and maintain acceptable learner behaviour.	Prepares the classroom environment for a particular subject(s) and maintain acceptable learner behaviour.	Prepares a classroom environment that is suitable for teaching a subject and the learners at a certain attainment level(s) and maintain acceptable learner behaviour.
	No effort to create a learning space that is conducive to teaching and learning; organisation of learning space hampers teaching and learning.	There is evidence of an attempt at creating and organising a suitable learning environment, which enables individual and/or group learning in a particular context.	Organisation of learning space enables the effective use of teaching resources and encourages and supports individual and group activities.	Organisation of learning space shows creativity and enables all learners to be productively engaged in individual and cooperative learning.
	No discipline and much time is wasted. Learners do not accept discipline or discipline is experienced by learners as humiliating.	Learners are disciplined and learning is not interrupted unnecessarily.	Learners are encouraged; there is positive reinforcement. Learners accept discipline without feeling threatened.	Learners are motivated and self-disciplined
9. Assess learners in reliable and varied ways; use the results of assessment to improve teaching and learning. **(Disciplinary and Pedagogical learning)** **Sadler's assessment theory. Millers pyramid of competence, Letsheka communality and fairness Beets & le Grange – Afrcanisation and assessment**				
Use knowledge of assessment policies and guidelines to develop assessment strategies suitable to their phase(s) and subject(s).	Does not demonstrate an understanding of different types of assessment, e.g. only uses tests	Demonstrates basic understanding of different types of assessment. Tends to use the same one over and over.	A variety of assessment techniques are used, allowing learners to demonstrate their abilities and assisting them to overcome learning barriers.	Different assessment techniques used to cater for learners from diverse backgrounds, with multiple intelligences and preferred learning styles while using alternative assessments to

				accommodate learners with barriers to learning.
Giving meaningful assessment feedback.	No evidence of meaningful feedback to learners, or feedback irregular and inconsistent.	Some evidence of feedback.	Feedback is regular, consistent and timeously provided.	Feedback is insightful, regular, consistent, timeous, and integrated as part of learning.
10. Positive work ethic, display appropriate values and conduct themselves in a manner that befits, enhances and develops the teaching profession. Eliot Freidson - Theory of professionalism, Ubuntu values				
Acquire sound professional knowledge and maintain professional behaviour.	Familiar with the code of conduct for student teachers and the SACE code of conduct for teachers.	Familiar with the code of conduct for student teachers, the school code of conduct for teachers and the SACE code of conduct for teachers.	Demonstrates good understanding of the code of conduct for students, school's code of conduct and SACE code of conduct. Acts professionally during all aspects of teaching practice and situations in accordance with all codes of conduct.	Demonstrates excellent understanding of the code of conduct for students, school's code of conduct and SACE code of conduct. Set an example of impeccable professional conduct in all aspects of teaching..
11. Reflect critically on their own practice Schön – importance of reflection, Bound – three stages, Jeffs and Smith – expansion of Bound. Discussion with elders (mentors)/ community of practice				
Able to reflect and assess own teaching from the perspective of other stake holders.	Unable to consider the impact of his/her teaching on other stakeholders.	Aware of the impact he/she has as a teacher on others.	Makes decisions based on a reflective awareness**.**	Deeply conscious of his/her impact on the curriculum/learners/parents/colleagues.

Is able to consider both the positive and negative aspects of their teaching and suggest improvements and alternatives.	Unable to be critical of his/her lessons and to suggest own improvements and recommendations.	Critical of his/her lessons but not always able to suggest effective improvements or recommendations.	Critical of his/her lessons and able to suggest some effective improvements or recommendations. Takes initiative in reflection and improving own teaching	Critical of his/her lessons and able to suggest effective improvements or recommendations. Takes initiative in reflection and improving own teaching. Tries new innovations in teaching.

Compiled by: Johann Dreyer, Piera Biccard and Fatima Fernandes

8.9 Guidelines for WIL in programme development

Requirements

During student's three years of study, WIL modules for Diploma (Level 6) programmes in higher education for birth to four, students will have to do a total of 18 weeks practical teaching in an ECCE site – three weeks per semester or six weeks consecutive continuously as each HIE will decide on. During their four years of study, WIL modules for Degree (Level 7) programmes in higher education for birth to four, students will have to do a total of 24 weeks practical teaching in an ECCE site – three weeks per semester or six weeks consecutive continuously as each HIE will decide on. During each WIL period students need to compile a portfolio as proof of WIL outcomes reached in the ECCE classroom context – thus six WIL portfolios need to be submitted as proof of WIL outcomes attained over the three years or three portfolios if they are doing six weeks consecutive. WIL is implemented in an integrated way within the Degree/Diploma. Students have to apply their knowledge and skills attained through the academic modules of the respective semester together with knowledge and skills mastered from and in practice, while guided by a professional mentor in the field of ECCE education. A study guide guides students in the implementation of informal and formal practical tasks, as well as reflective learning to develop an increasingly self-regulated teaching practice. Assessment of WIL by mentors and academic staff should be based on tangible proof of applied competencies in the form of a portfolio.

Standards for WIL experience

The table 8.9 in Chapter 8 presents the achievement standards for a WIL experience for the Foundation Phase. It is important that the ECCE WIL is well structured to afford the student a developmental experience. Each stage should be guided by a specific type of learning that is in keeping with the aim of bridging the theory-practice divide and addressing the concern for holistic development of the ECCE professional. This, of course, needs greater engagement with the field. In what follows the building blocks to build the WIL standards are provided to encourage debate and engagement of the standards for the ECCE WIL:

Stages which builds on each other and the types of WIL experiences to achieve this

- Preparatory Stage University-based learning (Theory)
- Initiation Stage Introduction to ECCE site-based learning (Observation)
- Consolidation Stage Guided practice (Scaffolded student performance)
- Autonomy Stage Independent practice (Independent student performance)
- Reflective Practitioner Stage Exemplary performance (Independent and reflective)

Each stage should take into consideration the following

- Knowledge
- Learning environment
- Professional conduct
- Planning and Supporting learning
- Assessment
- Broader involvement at the ECCE site (parents, community, support services)

Study guides to structure the WIL

The study guide must be based on the packaging of the standards once agreed upon. Once this is unpacked for an institution it could include three study units which address the following issues regarding the planning and implementation of the WIL portfolio:

Study unit 1	Self-assessment and reflection (Assessed by the University)

Study unit 2	Formative assessment in the ECCE site (Assessed by the mentor)
Study unit 3	Evidence of WIL for formal assessment of ECCE applied competencies (Assessed by the University)

Study Unit 1 deals with reflective learning and practice and students will provide evidence of this skill in Section 1 of their Portfolio. This component of WIL guides students in reflective learning:

- during the practical and
- during mastering of theoretical components of the programme.

Students have to show how they reflect on their own professional development and critically evaluate their own professional development as they learn in practice and from practice during the practical teaching period within the context of the ECCE classroom, and master pedagogical content knowledge through the academic modules of the programme.

Reflection on ECCE practice: Students need to reflect on a daily and continuous basis on their experiences within the ECCE classroom during each of their practical periods. Certain portfolio tasks include self-assessed activities or questions to guide and develop students' ability to reflect critically on own teaching skills and professional development. Reflection on the teaching strategies of other teachers, such as the mentor also forms part of reflective practice. A reflective journal therefore forms part of the WIL practical portfolio and should be filed in Section 1 of the Portfolio. Students should use this opportunity for professional development by reflecting daily on their experiences in practice. This forms an important part of the evaluation process as research shows that the ability to critically reflect on own teaching practice and experiences, as well as the practice of others, promotes expert teaching. Students' ability to reflect on ECCE practice should be continuously monitored by the mentor and also assessed by academic staff of the University.

Reflection on knowledge (Pedagogical content knowledge - PCK): All academic modules in the programme also require of students to reflect on their professional development through the theoretical components of the programme by completing the reflective addenda at the back of

each Study Guide. These reflections on knowledge, skills and attitudes gained through each module in this module cluster should also be included in the Section 1 of the portfolio.

Whilst everyone agrees that reflective practice is essential if a teacher is to continue to improve on their efficacy in the classroom, empowering teachers to value this approach is a little more challenging. Perhaps the answer lies in incorporating reflection into the structure of the lesson plan diary rather than focusing on reflective journals which teachers consider to be threatening and extra work.

Study Unit 2 guides students in the implementation of practical tasks, which are assessed through direct observation by the mentor. During the practical teaching period students will be guided to observe learning experiences as presented by a teacher and to present learning experiences to the learners. The teacher and/or mentor will support them in the planning and presentation and will also report on their progress. Students therefore have to plan and implement two practical tasks in the ECCE context. The mentor should not only support students in the planning of these tasks, but should also provide continuous formative feedback and assess the student's applied competence by completing a rubric on each of the tasks. While all mentor assessment forms are filed in Section 2 of the portfolio, all evidence of the implementation should be filed in Section 3 of the portfolio.

Apart from the marking rubric supplied for the various practical tasks, students need to include all mentor assessments and reports in Section 2 of the Portfolio as well as all forms that need to be completed and signed by the mentor and stamped by the school. All forms and resources are included in the WIL Admin booklet.

Study Unit 3 guides students in the compilation of all evidence of their work-integrated learning and consequent development of applied competency. NB. This evidence should correlate with the evidence submitted in Section 2 of the Portfolio. The University examiners will assess all this evidence summatively, which should be filed in Section 3 of the portfolio.

Section 4: Students should utilise Section 4 of their Portfolios to file any additional evidence. This section should also show students' own choice of compilation – thus include evidence that

students feel provides effective proof of their professional learning and development during the WIL period. Students should also feel free to motivate why they included certain work or examples.

Mentorship to support WIL

This is a key component of WIL and supervisors must be trained in how to be a mentor, devote sufficient time to feedback for students and allow for different sources of mentorship. One of the primary sources should be the class teacher as well as tutors and peers. More use can be made of technology when exposing students to 'best practice'. Training institutions should empower their staff to understand how to access relevant clips, download them and use them in their lectures. This must be coupled with making sure that the relevant technology is available in training centres/lecture theatres so that lecturers/facilitators are not demotivated by a failure of technology. Reflective practice is a key aspect of WIL and students must be given the tools to acquire this type of skill in order to improve on their pedagogy.

We need to ask the following: How can we ensure that our teachers are exposed to good quality teaching and receive mentorship at multiple levels? It appears that there is some emphasis on observation by both the assessors and the student. Are we perhaps putting too much emphasis on this and not enough on actual practical teaching where the student teacher has to 'get their hands dirty' from the onset. Perhaps this balance needs to be re-evaluated in the HEIs where students are complaining about insufficient practice.

The one complication we are all going to face is where the students will be doing a qualification higher than the practitioner at the site? What kind of mentorship should the practitioner receive to support our students? Then there is the issue of the practitioners being the student. In this case who mentors the student/practitioner and how does the student/practitioner get a good idea on practice beyond her own site? How does distancing of the practitioners from the student occurs when assignments have to be completed? These are critical questions that need further engagement.

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CHAPTER 9

MODES OF ENGAGEMENT

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9.1. Introduction

This NQF Level 6 Diploma and NQF Level 7 BEd Programme Framework for Birth to Four has been designed to be implemented using a mode of engagement that is relevant to a range of contexts. We talk about mode of engagement, rather than mode of delivery, because education, and particularly teacher education, is much more than simply delivering a programme.

One often hears the term Open Distance Learning - or ODL, sometimes ODeL. This term implies that Open Learning and Distance Education are almost the same, or are closely associated in some way, but these two terms cannot simply be conflated. Ideally we should strive to *open* all education, whether the mode of engagement is face to face, fully online, or anything in between.

Open learning is an approach to education that enables as many people as possible to take advantage of affordable and meaningful educational opportunities throughout their lives. In order to make this possible, we need to design programmes and adopt ways of teaching and learning that facilitate the *sharing of expertise, knowledge, and resources*. Through sharing we can *increase access*, but we also have to actively identify and *reduce barriers.* Key to facilitating access and reducing barriers to learning is *acknowledging the diversity of contexts* from which learners come, and the knowledge and expertise that they bring with them to the learning and teaching environment.

An approach to open learning is underpinned by key principles which guide how we can increase access to learning, enable and facilitate successful learning, and recognise success in learning towards further study:

a) Increasing access and removing barriers

- learners have meaningful access to opportunities for lifelong learning
- learning provision is flexible, allowing learners to increasingly determine where, when, what and how they learn, as well as the pace at which they will learn

b) Enabling success

- providers create the conditions for a fair chance of learner success through learner support, contextually appropriate resources and sound pedagogical practices
- learning processes centre on the learners and contexts of learning, build on their experience and encourage active engagement leading to independent and critical thinking

c) Accumulating success

- prior learning and experience is recognised wherever possible
- arrangements for credit transfer and articulation between qualifications facilitate further learning

These principles are often in tension with one another. For example, you might want to make learning as flexible as possible, but if you do this you may not be able to provide as much learner support as you think they need. So you are faced with some choices. Nonetheless, these choices can be made within the framework of the open learning principles.

In the PIECCE Baseline Findings report (Harrison, 2017) it is suggested that quality in ECCE teacher education amounts to "providing academic support, mentorship at multiple levels, encouraging reflective practice, embracing diversity, and producing adaptive, flexible educators who are able to be leaders in their field while acquiring a suite of competencies derived from policy and practice." We can see the links between these ideas about quality, and the principles of open learning, from providing access to all by embracing diversity, to providing varying forms of student support (through academic support and mentorship, for example), in order for students to succeed at becoming quality ECCE teachers.

9.2. Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is unpack what different modes of engagement can be, and to consider how the principles of open learning and the associated ideas of quality teacher education can be applied across a range of different modes of engagement. We encourage you to think about what mode of engagement you will employ for the NQF Level 6 or the NQF Level 7 programmes. This chapter assists in careful consideration of the implications of the mode of engagement at HEIs for different aspects of

programme implementation, including administration and planning, pedagogy, technology, structure, assessment, RPL, work-integrated learning, developmental education and resources.

9.3. Concepts and issues

Let's begin by considering what different modes of engagement means.

9.3.1. *Mode of engagement grid*

We can think about the context of the learning in relation to the geographical distribution of teachers and students. On the one hand we can think about a continuum ranging from face to face on campus, through sometimes on campus and sometimes off campus, to fully off campus (Fig. 1).

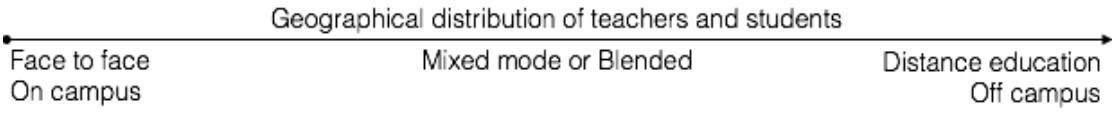


Figure 9.1. Geographical distribution of teachers and students vector

Related to this vector is a second one that considers the availability and use of ICT to support students (Fig 9.2). Within the South African education system, and especially in Higher Education, broadband access has greatly improved over recent times. Concurrently the cost of broadband has also decreased.

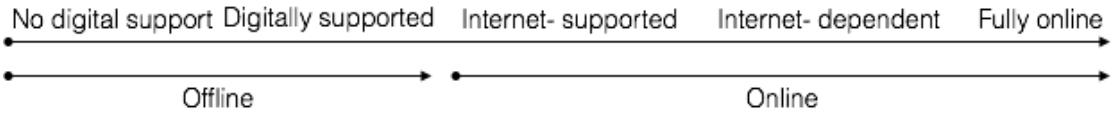
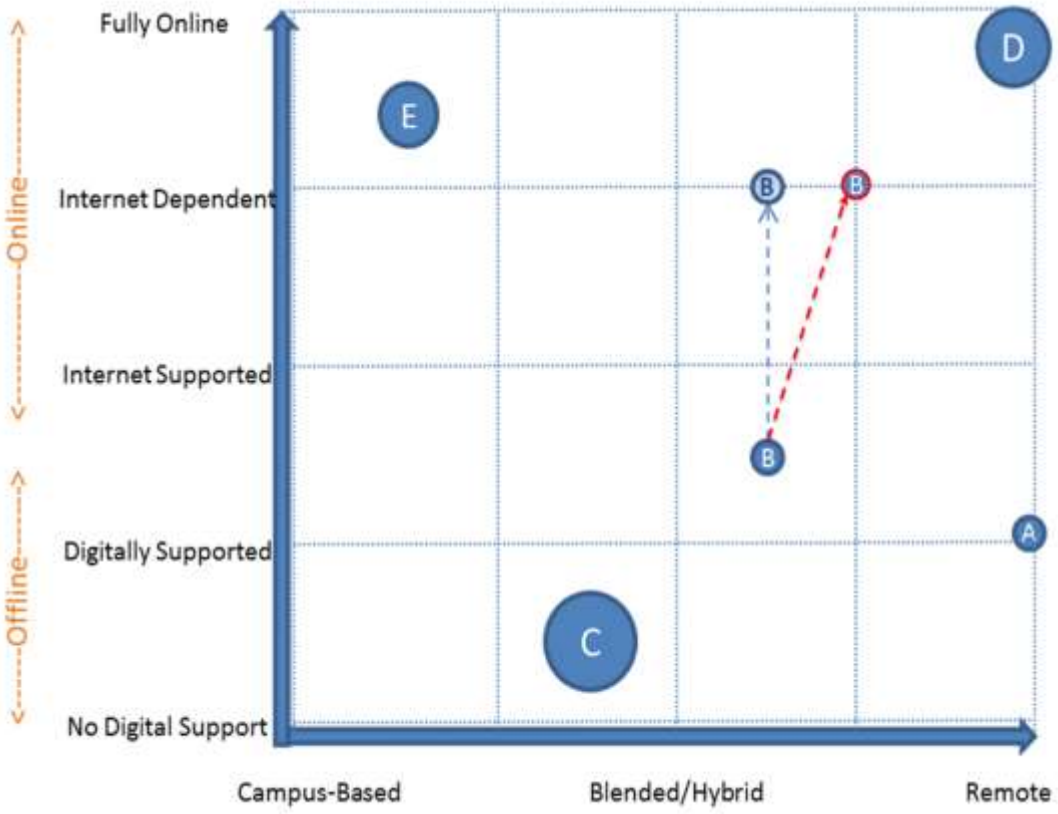


Figure 9.2. Extent of ICT support vector

The two vectors are aligned to the programme implementation context. The mode of engagement is essentially about the geographical and online context in which a programme is implemented in any particular institution. So, the term blended learning is a very loose term that refers to a mode of

engagement that is not strictly face to face, nor fully online, but anything in between. We can think about this as a grid, like the one in Figure9. 3:

Figure 9.3. Grid illustrating different dimensions influencing mode of provision (CHE, 2014).



Stop for a minute and think about where your institution is on this grid for the implementation of the birth to four Diploma or Degree.

So for example, are you like institution / programme “C”, which offers digital support in the form of DVDs, and where students are campus-based most of the time, but can study remotely using print-based materials and DVDs? Or are you closer to programme “A”, which is a fully online course where students never come onto campus?

Of course, this may change over time. Institution “B”, or programme “B”, on the grid might start off with some digital support with students spending students spending some time off-campus, but more

time campus-based. At some point they may decide to move towards a more internet supported environment, as access to the internet improves, which will allow students to be on campus less of the time. An important factor in making this decision will be who the target audience is, and the extent to which students have access to the necessary resources, such as broadband, for example.

The size of the group on the programme will also determine important things like the nature and extent of teacher educator-student and student-student interactions, level of support for students, nature of assessment and even the pedagogical approach used in the programme. So, institution "B" might think about these things differently from institution/programme "C" which has more students.

It is entirely possible that the designers of programme "A" realise that a high drop-out rate is caused by lack of student access to the internet, and the programme moves closer to "B".

How would you describe the programme at "E" on the grid?

Where on the grid will you place your institution or programme? This decision will impact on how you think about the different components of your programme design.

9.4. Guidelines for considering modes of engagement for programme development and materials design

9.4.1. *Student support*

Student support is key to student success in all components of the programme framework. As far as possible we need to build student support into the design of the programme. When we think about different modes of engagement student support is at the heart of what we consider. Regardless of the mode of engagement we need an understanding of who the students are and what context they come from. This will impact on the varying levels of support that students may need, and whether and how we can support them adequately. Support will range from support with RPL and administrative support, to academic and developmental education support, to pedagogical, through assessment support and support in accessing and using resources, including technology.

9.4.2. *Administration and planning*

This component of the framework includes considerations about Human Resources, registration, fees and so on. You will think about these differently depending on the mode of engagement. For example, if you are engaging with students in an online environment, what staff capacity will you need to design an

online programme and load it onto a Learner Management System (LMS), such as Blackboard or Moodle, to enrol students online, and to facilitate online feedback sessions? What possibilities does your LMS provide for online marking of assessments, and do your staff have the necessary skills? Do your students have access to the internet, and what will it cost them in terms of data?

9.4.3. *Pedagogy*

In the PIECCE Baseline Findings research report we ask the question "In what way should curricula be transformative?" (Harrison, 2017, page 122). In Chapter 6 of the programme framework we discuss the principles of culturally responsive, participatory and inclusive pedagogies. We should be asking the same question, and applying these same principles to how we teach student teachers, no matter what mode is used to engage students. Whether we are offering a face to face programme, a blended programme of some kind, or even a fully online programme we will model and teach using open, activity-based pedagogical practices, that support students to be reflective, critical thinkers.

In teacher education, we can take the example of teacher educators needing to demonstrate or model certain practices which students in turn need to practice in authentic environments with young children. A demonstration can be given in a video (face to face or online), followed by a reflective, mediated discussion (face to face or virtually in a chat forum), followed by a practical or work integrated session for students, during which they practice and reflect on their learning, and collect evidence (records, photographs, video and so on) to submit for feedback. This kind of scenario can be configured in different ways, incorporating pre- and post-contact session activities.

9.4.4. *Technology*

In order to engage students in a blended, internet supported or fully online environment we have to consider what access students will have to internet, on campus or off campus.

In addition to thinking about whether students have access to technology that is needed for the mode of engagement, it is important to consider the pedagogical use of technology. We can add two more vectors to the 'mode of engagement grid' in Figure 9.3 above.

The ICT in education vector in Figure 9. 4 shows a continuum of **how the technology is used**: to support instruction (for example content delivery, drill and practice, skills development through repeated practice); to support cognitive development (for example, use of technology to represent information); or as a tool to mediate knowledge construction (for example to represent knowledge in different ways) (Fig. 9.4).

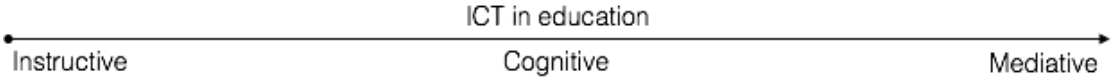


Figure 9.4. Pedagogical use of ICT in education vector

The fourth vector **describes the outcome of learning**, as described in Bloom's revised taxonomy (Clark, 2004). This includes remember, understand, apply, evaluate and create (Fig. 5).

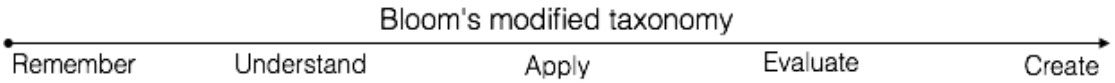


Figure 9.5. Bloom's revised taxonomy vector

These two vectors are always aligned to the learning outcomes of a programme.

So whether we are using technology in a blended context where students have access to digital devices on or off campus, or in an online context where students are using mobile devices and computers for self-study, the technology is driven by the outcomes of the programme and the pedagogy, not the other way around.

9.4.5. *Knowledge & practice standards and curriculum*

There are unlikely to be changes to the content of a programme in a distance mode, but rather in the way that content is presented and structured. An example of this would be the way in which content is 'chunked' in a blended or online programme, to support students to manage their self-study time more effectively. Content may also be presented in shorter pieces of text which are easier to scroll through online, rather than asking students to read through pages and pages of text on a small screen.

In a face to face programme we model sound pedagogy in our own teaching practice with students. As far as possible we try not to simply stand in front of students and talk at them. We provide access to

learning materials that facilitate doing, thinking and reflecting through activity-based learning, and which even promote self-study.

In an online or blended programme we do not simply digitise lecture notes and learning materials and 'dump' them in an online platform or Learning Management System (LMS). The same principles that inform the development of learning materials that we use in a face to face context are applied for blended and online use. The learning and teaching strategy, and not the technology, influences the quality of learning. Online learning, like any other learning, must create challenging activities that enable learners to link new information to old, acquire meaningful knowledge, and use their meta-cognitive abilities. (Ally, 2004).

A theoretical framework that is underpinned by three 'types of presence' provides a sound basis on which to structure content and design learning activities in order to integrate pedagogic mediation, sharing and collaborating, as well as critical reflection during the learning process. (Anderson & Elloumi, 2004)

- Teacher presence is about mediating, stimulating, guiding, and supporting learners to reflect on their experiences in order to master more complex academic knowledge and independent learning. In face to face tuition the learner and the teacher are able to have a conversation in which the teacher can respond to what the learner does or says and start to challenge and shift the conceptions that the learner is developing. In a blended or online environment, the materials take on the role of the teacher. The learning materials "talk to" and establish dialogue with the learners through the text. Feedback, whether it is written, verbal or virtual (e.g. in a chat forum), encourages students to think critically about what they have done, and provides a framework against which students might be able to discover and reflect on mistakes they may have made.
- Social presence is about understanding that learning is a social activity that involves collaborative construction of knowledge. The greatest danger in distance education is for learners to be isolated and endure the burden of learning in very prohibitive 'learning spaces'. Social presence is about collaborative learning and in online learning this occurs both synchronously and asynchronously, in a virtual sense.
- Cognitive presence is an act of the mind. It is about mental processing of information perceived/gained through experience and reflecting upon that information in order to construct new knowledge. Whether online or face-to-face, learning involves mental processes.

A balance of the 'three presences' is the best recipe for a meaningful learning experience, wherever you place your institution on the modes of engagement grid.

In teacher education we want to ensure that the content is not divorced from the practice. As in the example given in the section on Pedagogy, we can combine theory and practice in a blended learning environment by linking practice in the field (by the students) to an online discussion about that practice, and consolidating the learning during a face to face session.

9.4.6. *Structure*

Northedge (1994:140) suggests that "… when a course has a strong and explicit structure built into it, students are able to become independent far more rapidly." Northedge also suggests that "Purposeful action can only be undertaken within a frame of reference of some kind." The purpose of the structure of a programme is to support students along a learning pathway. This becomes particularly important when students are studying in blended or online mode, especially if students are not familiar with learning in an online or blended environment. Nevertheless, the use of digital and online technology does allow us to give students some choices about direction from within a set structure.

There are two other important things to consider in relation to how programmes are structured for different modes of engagement:

1. The first relates to the students' context and prior knowledge, and has to do with the level of proficiency in their use of technology. Do students have the necessary technological skills to navigate their way through online components of the programme? Salmon's 5 stage model (Salmon, 2004) can be used as an overarching model for designing and facilitating an online learning programme. This model builds in a component at the beginning off a programme that orientates students to online learning. This facilitates the development of technical skills students might not have, but importantly also gives opportunities for online socialisation, access and motivation.
2. The second consideration relates to feedback and support. Any good programme is structured to allow for regular opportunities for feedback and support, regardless of mode. However, when we consider blended and online modes we have to make sure that self-study and feedback or contact time is well balanced. For example, we need to structure the programme so that there is sufficient time for self-study before contact sessions take place, and sufficient time for marking of assessments before feedback sessions. Of course, the contact sessions themselves need to be long enough to allow for meaningful engagement between students, and between students and tutors.

9.4.7. *Assessment strategy*

All assessment principles and guidelines apply, regardless of the mode of engagement. Assessment is a process that has a clear purpose, assessing student teachers against agreed-upon standards, assessing integrated and multiple facets of knowledge and skill, including of teaching practice, and drawing on multiple sources of evidence collected over time in diverse contexts. All this is possible in blended and online modes. New modes of engagement allow us to think more creatively about assessment for learning, of learning and as learning. For example, students can be (formatively) assessed on their understanding of theoretical concepts through their participation in (compulsory) online chat forums and/or WhatsApp groups. It is imperative that in this process students are given feedback by an online facilitator, who guides and motivates them. Students can submit photographs, videos, written assignments and more, either face to face or online, for summative and formative assessment.

The importance of feedback cannot be stressed enough. When contact time is reduced or limited this feedback is vital to keeping the students in the learning circle, and to keeping them motivated and on-track. Remember, however, that feedback does not need to be limited to the teacher educators. Tutors and peers can also provide invaluable feedback and support on the ground. This allows for some flexibility of time, place and pace of assessment.

One further consideration for assessment in different modes of engagement is the question of human resources. We know that assessment evidence is best evaluated by individuals with the relevant expertise in ECCE. If you are using online methods of assessment, including feedback through chat forums and so on, you will need to make sure that the assessment staff also have the required technological skills to support and monitor students online.

9.4.8. *Recognition of Prior Learning*

Chapter 10 on RPL in this programme framework talks about RPL as a mechanism to facilitate flexible pathways into higher education, improve degree completion and implement competency-based assessment as recommended by Gair (2013). Blended forms of RPL have the potential to support this, by allowing students to submit evidence in a variety of formats, such as video of their own practice, written and photographic submissions, and other documentation. These ideas are reflected in the summary of recommendations arising from the PIECCE Baseline Findings research report (Harrison, 2017, page 77). This could save students time and money, alleviating the need to travel to an RPL centre. A face to face

component of RPL would include site visits, interviews and other possible support interventions, such as academic coaching. A caution is that unless students have the required ICT competencies, online submissions for RPL purposes can become a barrier in themselves. However, it would be possible to provide ICT coaching as part of the RPL process, and/or online coaching in development and submission of portfolios of evidence.

9.4.9. *Work Integrated Learning*

The recommendations in the PIECCE Baseline Findings research report (Harrison, page 67, 2017) speak about mentorship, the use of technology and reflective practise as key aspects of a quality WIL programme. Arising from this, the kind of work integrated learning (WIL) that we are exploring in Chapter 8 of the programme framework speaks about a model in which the student is an active participant in a collaborative, integrated and ongoing learning process. This model allows for teams of students, supported by the teacher educator, to plan, act, reflect and integrate academic learning with its application in the workplace. The role of the teacher educator in this process is to design responsive learning experiences, and to facilitate formative self- and peer-assessment, and summative assessment opportunities.

This model lends itself well to a blended mode of engagement. For example, if a developmental programme, or a component of such a programme is designed appropriately and well, students can use technological tools such as WhatsApp or online chat forums to communicate with a tutor, share challenges and discuss possible solutions within a community of practice, as well as submit tasks such as documents, videos, photographs, and so on. A general caution in relation to videos of classroom / ECCE site practice relates to ethical requirements to get permission from parents/teachers to take videos of children. Measures would need to be put in place to verify the authenticity of evidence submitted. Remember any form of online engagement can be followed up and consolidated in a face to face context.

The use of technology could alleviate the need for regular, time consuming site visits, and could facilitate timeous, real-time input and feedback on student practice.

9.4.10. *Developmental education*

In Chapter 5 of the programme framework we put forward an idea of developmental education which regards academic practice as something that is developed over time, rather than a set of skills that are content-independent and practiced in a void. This implies that for successful developmental education

students require ongoing, integrated implementation of a range of strategies, and ongoing input and support at different times.

ICT forms part of developmental education, and if well integrated will support student participation through digital and online technologies in other components of the programme. Indeed, a developmental programme can itself be offered in a blended format.

Even in a face to face context, ongoing coaching and support could be provided using digital and online tools such as email, chat forums, blogs, WhatsApp groups and online courses (through an LMS such as blackboard, Moodle etc.) These forms of support can be sustained beyond the life of the programme giving newly qualified student teachers opportunities to remain part of valuable communities of practice (Harrison, page 39, 2017).

9.4.11. *Resources*

Whatever mode of engagement we decide to use for our programmes, we need to ensure that the resources are easily accessible, and support the approach to teaching and learning. For example, if we want students to engage in a blended or online mode where they are expected to do certain amounts of self-study, we need to provide (online or print-based) learning materials that support reflective practice and critical thinking in self-study activities, following the same sound pedagogical principles that we follow in a face to face mode. (We have developed some exemplar materials for selected modules to accompany this programme framework.)

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CHAPTER 10

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING

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10.1 Introduction

Internationally, there is renewed focus on the recognition of prior learning (RPL) aimed at enhancing countries' human capital and participation in the competitive global economy (Cavaco, Lafont & Pariat, 2014; Pitman & Vidovich, 2013). Consequently, RPL is a mechanism to facilitate flexible pathways into higher education, improve degree completion, and implement competency-based assessment (Gair, 2013). RPL is focused on the recognition and validation of acquired experience (RVAE) (Diedrich, 2013) and is associated with access to lifelong learning (DHET, 2013), social justice (Jackson, 2011) and skills development (Cooper & Harris, 2013).

In South Africa, RPL is closely associated with credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) as noted by UMALUSI (2010). RPL is entrenched in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) since it was introduced for the purpose of redress, and social justice as well as to increase articulation and mobility into further education and training (DHET, 2013) for those previously excluded from education under apartheid (Gair, 2013).

The PIECCE working group on RPL notes that all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in South Africa appear to be implementing RPL according to established policies, procedures and guidelines (See list of HEIs' websites). Many HEIs have dedicated RPL offices and personnel. Despite this, the DHET (2013) contends that RPL has not yet begun to fulfil its potential since practice is lagging behind policy, and uptake is restricted (Cooper & Harris, 2013).

PIECCE has the potential to transform the early childhood field in South Africa. In this chapter, we highlight recognition of prior learning (RPL) as an essential feature of ECCE programme design.

How Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) conceptualise and implement RPL, will determine who enrolls on the new programmes. If we wish to be inclusive, our programme design and delivery must ensure redress of our historically marginalised field of education. This compels us to think creatively about how we facilitate access to and success in higher education for ECCE practitioners, as they are the key to the quality enhancement of programmes for our youngest and most vulnerable children.

10.2 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss how HEIs could extend current practice in RPL to advance equity, social justice and inclusion. This purpose is advanced bearing n mind that HEIs are encouraged to develop mechanisms for facilitating access to students across diverse contexts. Many existing ECCE practitioners are mature, non-traditional students who already possess experience. RPL is therefore a mechanism to facilitate flexible pathways into higher education, improve degree completion and implement competency-based assessment as recommended by Gair (2013). Moreover, validating ECCE practitioners' practical knowledge, and foregrounding this in the Diploma and Degree programmes has the potential to boost students' confidence in what they already know, and build on their prior knowledge. Consequently, one of the key goals of RPL should be to widen participation in the new programmes, as recommended by Dismore (2016).

10.3 Concepts and issues

There are a number of complex concepts and considerations for the implementation of RPL. In particular, RPL should not be misinterpreted as implying diminished standards or expectations. Instead, the rigor and integrity of the degree should be maintained, while recognising that some students will possess knowledge and skills 'beyond the novice' (Gair, 2013). Furthermore, institutions must strive to balance the recognition of prior knowledge and skills, current learning needs and graduate knowledge and skills, including how to translate theory into practice in diverse ECCE settings. Equally important is recognising that RPL must be accompanied by support required for success in academic learning.

Harrison (2017:75) found that language is a significant barrier since 95% of HEIs conduct RPL in English, despite it being the majority of applicants' non-mother tongue. HEIs should therefore prioritize alternative methods and additional support mechanisms such as extra training sessions or assignments.

10.3.1 *Definition of the concept of RPL*

RPL is a process through which informal, non-formal and formal learning are measured, mediated for recognition across diverse contexts, and certified against the requirements for access, credit, inclusion or advancement in the workplace or formal education and training system (SAQA, 2014). RPL provides for the recognition for prior learning regardless of when or where it occurred (Andersson, Fejes & Sandberg, 2013). In this way, it makes prior learning visible by recognising non-formal and informal processes. However, it is essential to distinguish RPL from credit transfer for formal learning. PIECCE recognises that existing ECCE practitioners have prior practice learning and current competencies that can be recognized, assessed, and accredited (Gair, 2013).

10.3.2 *Type of student*

Many existing ECCCE practitioners are experienced and need to be distinguished from other students who enroll for initial teacher education programmes. They are emerging professionals, since they may already possess some of the Basic Competences for Professionally Qualified Early Childhood Educators (DHET, 2017). This includes:

- ECCE practitioners who have acquired knowledge, experience and skills gained through informal or formal training.
- ECCE practitioners with years of workplace practice and experience.
- ECCE practitioners who have credit bearing certificates for portability and admission to the diploma/ degree programmes.
- ECCE practitioners who are willing to do additional training as top-up and support to address their identified gaps e.g. academic support for foundational learning and any gaps identified through RPL.
- ECCE practitioners who completed short courses with credits or without credits as well as those with attendance certificates as proof of their learning.

- Mature, experienced ECCE students could potentially complete the programmes in a shorter time by reducing the duration of the programmes.

10.3.3 *Value and Potential of RPL*

Much of the existing research notes that the uptake of RPL is limited. Many countries are currently addressing the barriers to uptake since RPL has the potential to:

- Advance economic goals through stimulating mobility in the labour market (Pitman & Vidovich, 2013).
- Promote social/democratic objectives e.g. the validation of informal and non-formal learning to increase access to education (Diedrich, 2013; Pitman & Vidovich, 2013; Bofelo, Shah, Moodley, Cooper & Jones, 2013)
- Redress social injustice through addressing the needs of historically under-represented learners in higher education (Pitman & Vidovich, 2013)
- Embody emancipation and social justice by advantaging the excluded and illuminating knowledge that was previously invisible, and breaking down discriminatory barriers to education in order to advance a human rights agenda (Gair, 2013; Barros, 2013)
- Endorse lifelong learning and recognise mature women's contributions to the economy and the skilled labour market, enhance access to learning institutions, and help workers acquire 'qualified' status without compelling them to relearn what they already know (Gair, 2013)
- Facilitate the conversion of not-for-degree (NFD) studies into degree studies by recognising NFD studies as an alternative entry mechanism for students without the requisite qualifications (Klein-Collins & Wertheim, 2013). For example, we should explore whether the completion of relevant short learning programmes could allow for credit transfer towards a diploma or degree course.
- Implement the Degree Qualifications Profile, a competency-based approach to measure the outcomes of learning, i.e. what students already know and can do (Klein-Collins & Wertheim, 2013).

- Implement contextualization as a teaching strategy, where students' prior knowledge acquired at home, school and community is linked to academic content to enhance the meaning and relevance of academic material. HEIs should therefore make meaningful connections between what the student knows and the new content to be learned (Wyatt, 2016).
- Make education more accessible and assist in closing the gap between privileged and marginalized groups.

Pitman and Vidovich (2013) promote an alternative approach to understanding RPL as a Bourdieuian process of 'capital conversion'. Consequently, an individual's economic, social and cultural capital are assessed as being equal to academic experience (Pitman & Vidovich, 2013). Rather than considering epistemology of prior learning, institutions should consider the equivalence in socio-cultural influence. In addition, HEIs should view RPL as more than an objective act of measuring specific learning outcomes. Furthermore, RPL requires ongoing communication and reflection to allow the student and the assessor to reach mutual understanding of what learning has occurred (Pitman & Vidovich, 2013). This would also ensure that RPL is more learner-centred in nature. As noted by Armsby (2013), reflective practice is a cornerstone of work-based learning and institutions should recognise that learning occurs most effectively through participation in a community of practice. Therefore, HEIs could engage in the process of capital conversion if they recognise prior life and work experience.

10.3.4 *Confidence building*

In PIECCE, confidence building is an important consideration, particularly for ECCE practitioners who have historically not had access to higher education. We therefore recommend that HEIs should:

- Give credit to the practical experience of the ECCE practitioners who wish to pursue further studies as this has the potential to boost students' confidence and build on their prior knowledge (Armsby, 2013; Dismore, 2016; Hyland-Russel & Syrnyk, 2015).

- Provide appropriate pedagogical support to students who lack the advanced literacy skills required to complete portfolios of prior learning and ensure their success in academic learning as this will have a positive impact on building students' confidence.
- Promote students' positive beliefs about themselves and their place in the world through consciously creating ways for them to reflect on their experience and actively participate in their learning (Hyland-Russell & Syrnyk, 2015). As Burkšaitienė (2015) has pointed out, students require moral support throughout the RPL process to build their confidence. Moreover, RPL staff at HEIs need to develop appropriate counselling skills.
- Use new technologies in reading and writing while developing ECCE practitioners' competencies and their self-esteem (Cavaco *et al*., 2014).
- Design work integrated learning to improve students' confidence (Dressler & Keeling, 2004:225).
- Provide integrated support through strong mentorship to build students' confidence, and facilitate their transition from informal to formal setting.

10.3.5 *Transition from informal schooling to formal qualifications*

It is also important to consider how to support students to transition successfully to higher education. However, PIECCE may provide opportunities to develop bridging programmes in partnerships with HEIs and TVET colleges to ensure that students are able to meet the academic demands of full qualifications at university level. As indicated in the PIECCE research report, there would be a need to pay attention to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students and employ contextualisation to link their personal experiences and cultural knowledge with academic content, as recommended by Wyatt (2016). Consequently, institutional policies and practices must explicitly address the barriers to learning and assessment in order to build student's confidence and facilitate smooth transition from informal schooling to formal qualifications.

10.3.6 *Access to RPL*

Many existing ECCE practitioners require access to RPL for (i) admission and (ii) credit transfer. In particular, for admission to the Diploma in Early Care and Education or Dip (ECCE), four cohorts

of ECCE practitioners deserve special consideration. This includes practitioners who have completed the (i) Further Education and Training Certificate in Early Childhood Development (FETC: ECD), (ii) National Certificate in Vocational Training NC(V) in Early Childhood Development at NQF Level 4, (iii) Report 191 National Certificates at N4, N5 and N6 equivalent to NQF Level 5, or (iv) Higher Certificate in Early Childhood Development at NQF Level 5. Many of these practitioners do not hold National Senior Certificates (NSC) with Diploma endorsement. Therefore, HEIs are encouraged to recognise the equivalence of the NQF Level 4 occupational-directed and vocational-directed qualifications. Similarly, for admission to the Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Care and Education Degree or BEd (ECCE), the equivalence of qualifications at NQF Level 5 should be recognised. If HEIs insist on matric certificates, it would pose a threat to admission for non-traditional ECCE students, many of whom are experienced practitioners. Moreover, a lack of RPL in PIECCE would be a significant disincentive to mature-aged ECCE students with prior practice knowledge who are at a different starting point as compared to inexperienced students (Gair, 2013). In addition, failing to recognise indigenous knowledge within curricula would constitute an ongoing barrier to learning.

We need to explore ways of promoting access to RPL and repurpose it within HEIs (Klein-Collins & Wertheim, 2013). Important considerations include (i) staff capacity development and support related to the rationale for the process, the learning theory that supports it and the academic integrity and rigor of the RPL methods employed, (ii) financial aid for the costs associated with assessing students' knowledge, skills and abilities for the purpose of awarding credits, and (iii) a learner support system. This will require dramatic transformation in how HEIs structure the new programmes, award credits and implement the programmes.

In PIECCE, we further need to distinguish between credit accumulation and credit transfer (Umalusi, 2010). Credit accumulation is 'the totaling of credits required to complete a qualification, usually limited to a specific programme, often within a particular institution'. Paradoxically, credit transfer is 'the vertical or horizontal relocation of specific credits towards a qualification on the same or higher level, that usually takes place between programmes, often between different institutions' SAQA, 2006).

The Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for Early Childhood Development Educators (DHET, 2017) notes that:

- Many students who enter ECCE programmes are already employed in ECCE settings and possess knowledge as a result of learning in the workplace.
- In order to recognise relevant prior learning, learning outcomes must not be compromised in the process. RPL must occur on a student-by-student basis in order to make a professional judgment of the individual's prior learning.
- The admitting institutions should conduct RPL for access and advanced credit standing according to national policies, quality council policies and institutional policies. SAQA's National Policy for the Implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning (SAQA, 2013), outlines how providers should implement RPL.
- The CHE's RPL Policy must be also be considered.
- The 2017 Policy on the Minimum Requirements for Programmes Leading to Qualifications in Higher Education for Early Childhood Development Educators notes that Credit Accumulation and Transfer should:
    - Recognise that many students who embark on ECD educator programmes will already hold prior qualifications or part-qualifications that could be considered for credit accumulation and transfer (CAT) purposes.
    - These include credits gained at Level 5 and above through the completion of qualifications or part-qualifications developed, implemented and quality assured by the CHE, Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) and the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training (UMALUSI).
    - Prospective students, who obtain credits through relevant prior qualifications or part-qualifications, may receive recognition for previously earned credits. However, institutions need to establish the equivalence between the learning content and NQF level of the prior learning and the learning that will be 'credited' in the new qualification.
- The HEQSF (2013) provides that "any and all credits for an incomplete qualification may be recognised by the same or different institution as meeting part of the requirements

for a different qualification, or may be recognised by a different institution as meeting part of the requirements for the same qualification".

- The HEQSF (2013) also provides that "a maximum of 50% of the credits of a completed qualification may be transferred to another qualification, provided also that no more than 50% of the credits required for the other qualification are credits that have been used for a completed qualification".
- Institutions should apply CAT according to the HEQSF and the CHE's CAT policy.
- RPL and CAT may lead to advanced credit standing if:
  - The admitting institution is "satisfied that the applicant has competence in the appropriate field of intended study at the appropriate entry level of the target qualification".
  - "… Candidates complete at least all the required credits at the exit level of the qualification" (DHET, 2017).

10.3.7 *RPL Strategies*

Institutions are encouraged to adopt a variety of methods of RPL in order to assess what knowledge the student has that can be formalised against an academic qualification. RPL methods include examinations, compiling individual portfolios or the formal review of training programmes to determine whether they are at university level (Klein-Collins & Wertheim, 2013). The first two methods assess what the individual knows and can do, whilst the second focuses on the learning outcomes. The last method assesses the inputs of the programme, including the materials and learning activities. According to Popova-Gonci and Lamb (2012), it is also essential to assess students' integrated learning and critical thinking abilities and suggest that concept mapping be employed as an assessment tool.

The empirical data (Figure 1) collected for the PIECCE baseline report (2017) on current practices across the institutions, presented the issue of a misunderstanding around what RPL's role is evidencing an predominant emphasis on credit transfer and limited use of site visits to evaluate pedagogic practice (Harrison, 2017:75). This is concerning given that the essential purpose of RPL is to recognise the informal knowledge gained within the workplace which would be difficult to ascertain unless the student was assessed on site.

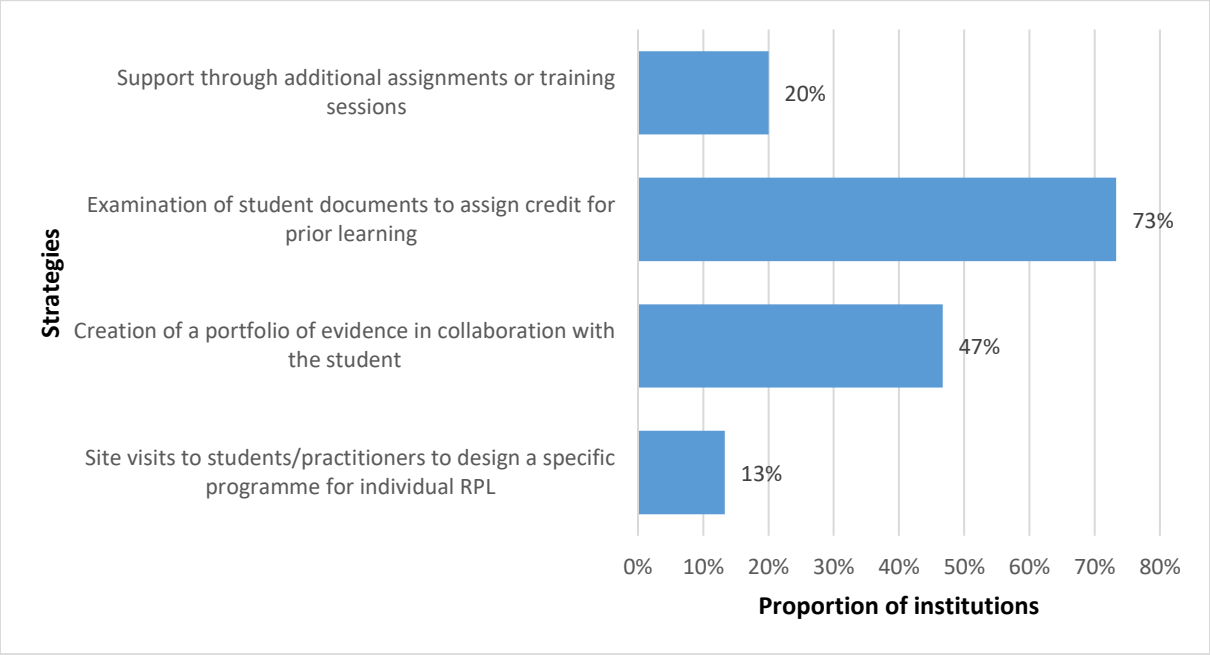

Figure 10.1 : Strategies for implementing RPL (Number of respondent institutions = 13)

Source: Harrison, 2017:75

Furthermore, the literature review in the PIECCE report, suggested that the creation of a Portfolio of Evidence, (PoE) is often challenging, owing to the fact that students/practitioners struggle with academic literacy and that PIECCE would need to look at this or consider alternative methods. The literature review considers the issue of dealing with students who are working in multilingual contexts, have literacy challenges of their own but are expected to be RPLed in non-mother tongue. The empirical data showed that 95% of RPL programmes run by the participating institutions, are delivered in English and only 15% in isiXhosa. The use of support through additional assignments or training sessions (20%) echoes with the empirical data linked to academic support, which showed that lecturers spend time providing extra training sessions, readings and workbooks for practicing of a new concept.

An acknowledged aspect of RPL is that of catering for the individual needs of the student, which inevitably requires a unique assessment process for each student that is being RPL'd. Designing individual programmes for RPL is time consuming and requires considerable manpower. This

raises the question of how much can an institution practically do in terms of implementing RPL? The solution emerges from thinking laterally and appreciating the strength in collaboration, which has been a powerful and unique aspect of the PIECCE project. If we accept that it is challenging for institutions that have high enrolment numbers to conduct RPL, then it is obvious that the solution can be found in providing the manpower through the collaborative efforts of two different types of teacher training institution. The proposal is to couple an NGO that has considerable spread over a number of provinces with the HEI that requires the manpower. As NGOs have spent many years working in the ECCE sector and thereby have acquired expert skills in the field, they provide an 'army' of relatively inexpensive but expert manpower who are able to access students on site and provide mentorship, assessment and support in the RPL process. Furthermore when addressing the issue of the inequity attached to the expectation that a student should produce a PoE in English whilst teaching in mother-tongue, can be partially resolved by allowing the expert assessor to conduct a mother-tongue interview with the student whilst they are on site. This document can be completed by means of technology e.g. making use of an APP or simply filled in by the assessor whilst the interview is being conducted. The benefit of the mother tongue interview is that it allows the student to demonstrate what they know without being challenged by the need to formulate their thoughts in a foreign language. This is a step towards equity as it means that the PoE is not only consisting of English documents but can have some documents that are in mother tongue. As most HEIs would argue that they are unable to assess a document that is not in English and that their training programmes are in English therefore the student must know how to do their assignments in the aforementioned language, having a few assignments that are already assessed by the site visit assessor, resolves the problem. The student is still producing the majority of their material in English but there is some attempt at acknowledging the need to provide the advantage of a home language produced assignment.

Portfolio assessment should be supplemented by demonstrated competencies beyond written narratives and supporting documents submitted by the student by including video demonstrations, work products and simulations (Klein-Collins & Wertheim, 2013). One of the

aims of the PIECCE project was to be innovative in their programme development. The RPL process in particular the PoE, provides a vehicle for the latter. It is clearly expensive to conduct site visits yet if we accept that RPL's emphasis should be on the informal practical knowledge of the student, then we need to provide opportunities for the student to generate this information in their PoE outside of a site visit. One of the ways in which this can be done is by means of technology. Despite poverty, evidence has shown that most students will have access[1] to a sophisticated phone (Imaginet, 2016). The phone can be used to film short clips such as how the teacher implements a sensory-based activity for the 3-year-old learners in their classroom. The phone can additionally be used to take pictures of the classroom or outside activities. When the material is coupled with a short reflective piece, they allow the assessor to gather information about student's practice. The information can be burnt onto a DVD disc (something that the academic support department can assist with) which is then placed in the PoE together with the reflective piece. The film clips can also be sent via WhatsApp to an administrative assistant who may be charged with burning the material to a disc.

Furthermore, RPL requires ongoing communication and reflection to allow the student and the assessor to reach mutual understanding of what learning has occurred (Pitman & Vidovich, 2013). This would ensure that RPL is more learner-centred in nature. The empirical data from the baseline report evidenced a common understanding of a reflective teacher who uses her reflection to plan and improve on their practice. When RPL'ing a student it therefore makes sense to require them to place in their PoE a letter of motivation that will encourage the student to reflect on their informal knowledge and how this should be recognised as an *entre* to a particular qualification. Reflection can further be evidenced in the student's lesson plans, which should contain a section on the template that allows for daily reflection. The quality of these reflections and evidence of how the teacher has tweaked her pedagogy as a result of the reflective practise, would be an aspect that would need to be assessed by the expert and enrich the RPL process. The above recommendations are a few examples of how the programme development for the 0-

[1] S.A. has a population of 51.8 million with a total of 66.1 million people having a cellphone – Imaginet, 2016.

4 ECCE Diploma/Degree can work towards ensuring that RPL is a key aspect of restoring equity, addressing inclusivity and providing quality ECCE for learners.

10.4 **Guidelines for the implementation of RPL**

- Recognising that ECCE students with prior knowledge constitute non-traditional HEI students, since they are experienced practitioners.
- Strengthening RPL to advance equity, social justice and inclusion, building on current best practice.
- Viewing RPL as a specialized pedagogical practice, since PIECCE programmes have a specific purpose and a specialized design.
- Developing mechanisms for facilitating access to students across diverse contexts and building these into the programme design.
- Proposing a credit accumulation, exemption, recognition and transfer system, accompanied by a convincing rationale appropriate for the ECCE context. In particular, there should be (i) credit recognition for experience gained in the early childhood workplace, and (ii) credit transfer for students who completed qualifications or part qualifications with another training provider and transfer to a HEI.
- Recognising the equivalence of Level 4 ECD qualifications to Grade 12/matric.
- Recognising the relevance of TVET qualifications at NQF level 5 and 6.
- Exploring additional forms of RPL to augment portfolio assessment such as workplace assessment, interviews, simulations and admission tests.
- Providing appropriate pedagogical support to students who lack the advanced literacy skills required to complete portfolios of prior learning, and for success in academic learning.
- Providing pedagogical support for students to progress from experiential knowledge to codified/formal knowledge.
- Considering how to support students to transition successfully to higher education.
- Exploring the possibility of developing guidelines for credit transfer towards practice teaching requirements.

- Exploring whether credits could be allocated towards some modules, where credible and appropriate.

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Pitman, T. & Vidovich, L. (2013) Converting RPL into academic capital: Lessons from Australian universities, *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 32(4), 501-517, DOI: 10.1080/02601370.2013.778075

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UMALUSI. (2010) *Proposed Policy on Credit Accumulation, Exemption, Recognition and Transfer: Discussion Document*. Pretoria: Umalusi.

Wyatt, T.R. (2016) Contextualization Strategies for Implementation of the Common Core, *Issues in Teacher Education*, Fall 2016

List of websites containing HEIs policies and procedures

Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) www.cput.ac.za/study/rpl

North West University
http://www.nwu.ac.za/sites/www.nwu.ac.za/files/files/i-governance-management/policy/8P-8.4.3-RPL_e.pdf

Rhodes University
https://www.ru.ac.za/admissiongateway/
https://www.ru.ac.za/registrar/info/policies/
https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/institutionalplanning/documents/RPL%20POLICY%202007.pdf

University of Fort Hare (UFH)
http://www.ufh.ac.za/tlc/sites/default/files/UFH%20Recognition%20of%20Prior%20Learning%20Policy.%20TLC.005.pdf
http://www.ufh.ac.za/files/tlc/policy/UFHRecognitionofPriorLearningPolicyTLC005.doc
http://www.ufh.ac.za/tlc/sites/default/files/UFHTeachingandLearningPolicy.pd

University of the Free State (UFS)
https://www.ufs.ac.za/supportservices/departments/recognition-of-prior-learning-office-home

https://www.ufs.ac.za/supportservices/...of-prior.../rpl-application-forms-and-information

University of Johannesburg (UJ)
https://www.uj.ac.za/studyatUJ/sec/Pages/Recognition-of-Prior-Learning.aspx
https://www.uj.ac.za/studyatUJ/sec/Documents/RPL%20Request%20Form.pdf

University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (UKZN) https://ukznextendedlearning.com/about-us/
http://www.joe.ukzn.ac.za/.../Exploring_RPL_assessment_device_and_or_specialised_pedagogica.

University of Limpopo https://www.ul.ac.za/index.php?Entity=agri_rules
https://www.ul.ac.za/index.php?Entity=bio_rules_post

University of Pretoria (UP) http://www.up.ac.za/en/yearbooks/2017/modules/view/RPL%20320

University of South Africa (UNISA) http://www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/Search-results/Apply-for-admission/Undergraduate-qualifications/Recognition-of-Prior-Learning-(RPL)/RPL-for-module-credit www.unisa.ac.za/sites/corporate/default/.../Recognition-of-Prior-Learning-(RPL)

University of Stellenbosch http://academic.sun.ac.za/chae/rpl.html

Walter Sisulu University of Technology
http://wsu.ac.za/studywithus/images/resources/folded%20recruitment%20brochure.pdf

University of the Witwatersrand (WITS)
https://www.wits.ac.za/glu/academic-programmes/application-process-for-the-glu/

Resources for the teacher educator for RPL
This might include a classroom observation tool/APP, so that the site visitor has an assessment tool to use when evaluating the student that is being RPL'd.