
Research report

An overview of distance education and resource-based learning initiatives at the University of the Western Cape

SAIDE

The South African Institute for Distance Education
September 1997

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II Introduction

In 1997, a proposal to set up a process of investigation into the feasibility of a university-wide Programme of Lifelong Learning was adopted by the Senate Executive of the University of the Western Cape. The first phase of the process was to culminate in a roundtable discussion in September.

Three task groups were formed to prepare the work for the discussions. The task groups are:

- Distance Education and Resource-based Learning (Convenor: Prof. Colin Bundy)
- Continuing Professional Education (Convenor: Prof. Shirley Walters)
- Lifelong Learning (Convenor: Prof. Cecil Abrahams)

As part of its brief, each task group is required to perform educational, advocacy and investigative functions. The full brief of the task group on Distance Education and Resource-based Learning is as follows:

As part of the Proposal for a Programme of Lifelong learning at UWC by 2001, the TG is to explore and examine distance education and RBL both at UWC and in a national context, consider its potential use and application in the broad scheme of the university's future, and bring forward recommendations to address the role that distance education and RBL should play in that future. There should be a plan of action which accompanies the report. The report is to serve along with the TG report on Continuing Professional Education at a university Roundtable Discussion at the end of September¹

The task group on Distance Education and Resource-based Learning identified as one of its aims "to 'obtain a snapshot of DE/RBL activities on campus' and understand what the issues and barriers are that colleagues are confronting in their work".²

This research report was prepared by the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) under the auspices of the task group on Distance Education and Resource-based Learning. It

¹ Walters, Shirley: 19 February 1997. *Proposal for a Programme of Lifelong Learning at UWC by 2001*

² Walters, Shirley: 6 June 1997. *Lifelong Learning Programme Proposal*

reports on the findings of a survey of staff at the University of the Western Cape involved in distance education and/or resource-based learning initiatives. The research was funded by the Ford Foundation.

What follows is a report on the outcomes of a survey of academic departments³ through two self-administered questionnaires as well as ten in-depth interviews with academic staff. It contains a description of the methodology and a detailed discussion of the findings. Finally, the key issues that emerged during phase one of the research are outlined. The report is descriptive in nature, and does not attempt to make recommendations. The findings of this report will be integrated and further analysed in a report to be prepared by Professor Shirley Walters for the September roundtable discussions.

³ The term 'department' is used in its widest sense and includes academic departments and university-based centres, institutes and schools

III Methodology

3.1 Research strategy

One of the tasks the Distance Education and Resource-based Learning task group set out to do was to provide a 'snapshot' of distance education and resource-based learning activities at UWC. This entailed obtaining general factual information about staff involvement in RBL and DE - initiatives.

The time constraints for the research project and the importance of obtaining adequate response from academic staff across the university necessitated that the research be conducted in a short period of time while at the same time making minimum impact on respondents' time. This issue was highlighted at a meeting of the task group on 14 May, 1997 where it was suggested that information about staff involvement in DE and RBL "could be filled in quickly by HODs".⁴

It was therefore decided that a general survey of distance education and resource-based learning activities across all faculties and departments should be undertaken making use of two self-administered questionnaires. There was, however, also a need for more in-depth information. Minutes from a meeting of the task group in May 1997 states that: "[I]t was agreed that it was crucial to move to a deeper level to hear what colleagues experiences are in relation to the barriers and opportunities for successful delivery".⁵

Against this background, it was decided to supplement the questionnaires with a series of in-depth qualitative interviews with a sample of distance education and/or resource-based learning practitioners.

⁴ Minutes of a meeting of the Task Group on Distance Education and Resource-based Learning: 14 May 1997

⁵ Ibid

3.2 Self-administered questionnaires

Two questionnaires were designed, one each for distance education and resource-based learning. The questionnaire for distance education had as its primary focus, to obtain rather specific information on the current provision of distance education at UWC. Respondents were asked to report in detail on all distance education courses offered by their departments.

The strategy of the questionnaire on resource-based learning differed from that of the distance education questionnaire in that it asked respondents to identify the one course offered by their respective departments they believed to be the most innovative, and in which substantial use of resources and designed learning materials are made. The focus of this questionnaire was on providing a broad overview of resource-based learning practices at UWC and to identify pockets of innovation.

The questionnaires were distributed via the internal university postal system to all heads of departments (HODs) at UWC (80 in total). The task of administrating the dissemination and the receipt of questionnaires was undertaken by the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE).

The response rate for both questionnaires was fairly high. Of the hundred and sixty questionnaires disseminated (80 DE and 80 RBL) sixty-five questionnaires were returned. The overall response rate is thus 40,63%. A more accurate response rate, which takes into account the slight anomalies in both the RBL and DE survey, is 37,5%.⁶ These anomalies are described in more detail below.

⁶ This percentage takes into account both the fact that in the distance education survey - due to some administrative problems - two departments returned two questionnaires each. Also, three departments completed two questionnaires each in the RBL survey. For the remainder of this report, in the case of distance education, assumptions will be based on thirty questionnaires - and not thirty-two - returned by thirty departments and therefore a 37,5% response rate.

3.2.1 Distance education

Twenty-eight questionnaires were returned and a further two completed in an interview situation.⁷ This allows for a 35% response rate without intervention from the researcher and a 37,5% response rate with intervention. Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of the response to the distance education questionnaire across faculties.

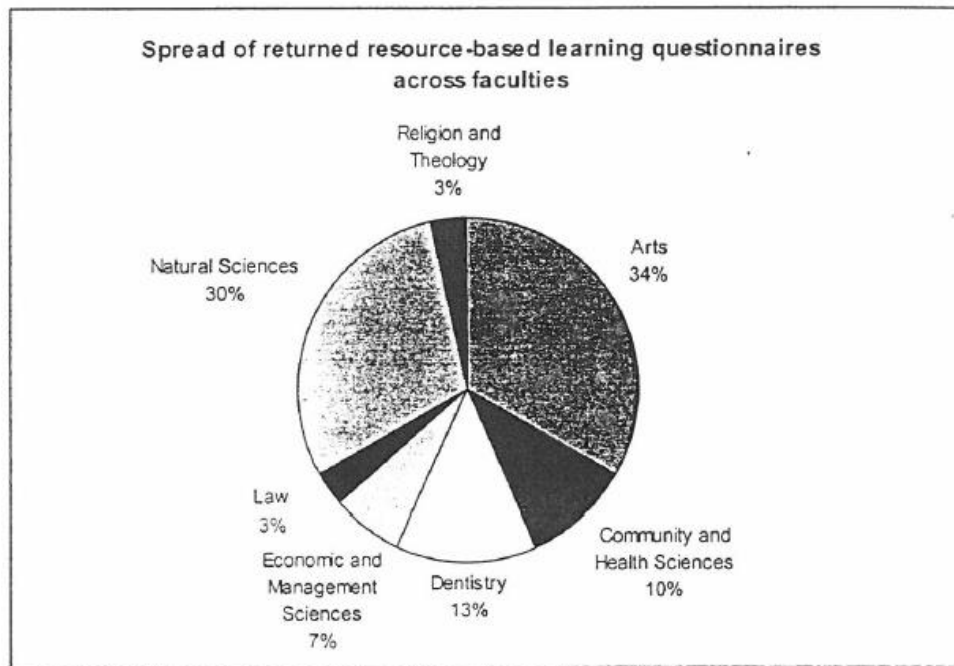


Figure 1

⁷ Acting on information made available to the researcher, she set up interviews with staff members from two departments involved in DE provision, even though they had at the time not yet returned the questionnaires. On setting up the appointments, it was agreed with the relevant parties that the completion of the survey questionnaire would be integrated into the interview.

3.2.2 Resource-based learning

Thirty-three questionnaires were returned from thirty departments. In three cases, departments completed two copies of the questionnaire to report on two courses rather than just one. The response rate thus is 37,5%.⁸ Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of the response to the resource-based learning questionnaire across faculties.

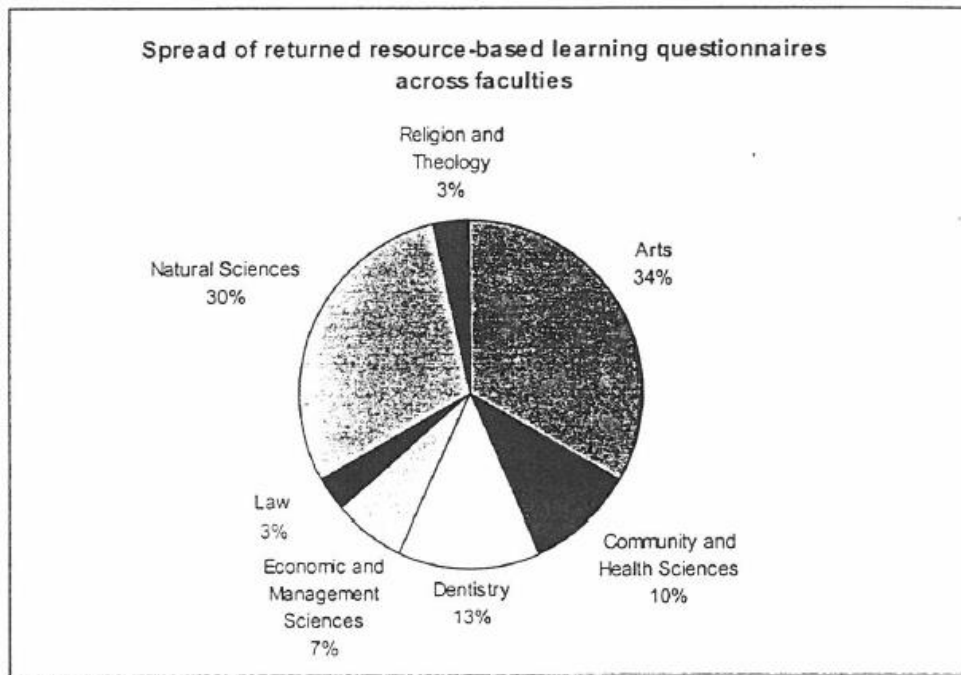


Figure 2

⁸ This response rate is based on the fact that thirty departments returned questionnaires. Bearing in mind that in three cases departments completed two questionnaires each to report on two courses, it is also important to note that whereas all statistics in this report that relate to the response rate are based on the thirty departments that responded to the RBL survey, statistics relating to the courses offered through resource-based learning are based on the thirty-three courses reported on in the survey.

3.3. **Structured** interviews

Ten structured interviews were conducted, three of which were with staff involved in distance education courses and seven with resource-based learning practitioners. The interviews were scheduled for an hour and a half each. In a few cases, however, when relevant staff indicated that they did not have that much time available, interviews were conducted in an hour each.

The selection of the sample was a two-fold process. Based on questionnaires returned by the 18th of August⁹, the last day for the return of the questionnaires, the researcher identified staff involved in DE and/or RBL initiatives she would like to interview. In addition to the data obtained from the questionnaires, the task group on Distance Education and Resource-based Learning provided the researcher with a list containing the names of a number of individuals involved in either distance education or resource-based learning. Drawing from both the questionnaires and the task group list, the interviewees were selected. Wherever possible, care was taken as to ensure that in selecting the sample, both the level at which courses are offered (i.e. post graduate, foundation course, etc.) and the faculty in which the course is offered are taken into account. It should be noted that as this is not a representative sample, generalisations cannot be made.

Interviews were conducted in the week of 18-22 August 1997.

⁹ It should be noted that only approximately 40% of the total number of returned questionnaires had reached the offices of CACE by the 18th of August. More than half of the questionnaires were received after this date. These could therefore not be taken into account when interviewees were selected.

IV Conceptual clarification

4.1 Resource-based learning (RBL)

Informed by a recommendation from the task group on Distance Education and Resource-based learning, a decision was taken not to use the term resource-based learning (RBL) in the self-administered questionnaires but rather to work with the notion of designed learning materials and resources. Members of the task group felt that it was of great importance to identify all innovative courses in which use is made of designed learning materials and resources, and that employing the term RBL, which is not widely used at UWC, may impact negatively on the response rate.

Whether the concepts designed learning materials and resources adequately capture the different aspects and components of a resource-based learning approach certainly is open to question. The decision to use the notion of resources and designed learning materials - especially the way it was used in the questionnaire without any further elucidation - definitely entails a focus on descriptive data about the kinds of media used in courses, providing limited scope for obtaining information on the way in which these resources are integrated into the course design, issues of pedagogy, and the changed role of the teacher in a resource-based learning context.

In order to focus specifically on these aspects of an RBL approach, the term resource-based learning was used alongside the notion of designed learning materials and resources in the structured interviews. Also, interviews started off with a brief discussion of the different kinds of meanings attached to the term resource-based learning and the way the term will be used in this survey. In most of the cases, interviewees seemed to be comfortable with the term resource-based learning.

In line with the task group on Distance Education and Resource-based Learning's brief, the term resource-based learning will be used in this report. A particularly useful definition of resource-based learning is the following:

Resource-based learning, as understood in South Africa, could take place in a contact institution. The key to the difference between contact tuition and resource-based learning is the role of the teacher. Even though the teacher may be present (unlike in a distance situation), the shift in emphasis in the teaching and learning process is from

*the teacher as the source of knowledge/information to the teacher as the facilitator of learning from resources. The resources have typically been selected and adapted not only for their content, but also for the ways in which they support independent study."*¹⁰

¹⁰ Welch, Tessa. 1997. South African Institute for Distance Education

4.2 Distance Education

The term distance education, as used in this report, refers to a teaching method that caters for off-campus students. The following definition highlights a distinguishing feature of distance education:

The difference between resource based learning and distance education though is not just semantic. It has to do with the place of the teacher in the learning act. Distance education is described as the quasi-permanent separation of the teacher and learner (Keegan: 1990:45) and as 'consistent non-contiguous communication' (Holmberg, 1995:6).¹¹

It should be noted, however, that distance education does not imply that there is no contact between teacher and learner. Provision can be made for contact sessions with the teacher and learners may also receive support from tutors and mentors. In distance education, learners live and study remotely from campus and course materials play a central role in the learning process.

¹¹ Relf, Stephen. 1996. "Resource-based Learning at CSU: Changing roles in learning and teaching". In: *Occasional Papers in Open and Distant Learning*. Number 20. Charles Stuart University.

V Findings and discussion: Distance education at the University of the Western Cape

5.1 Introductory remarks

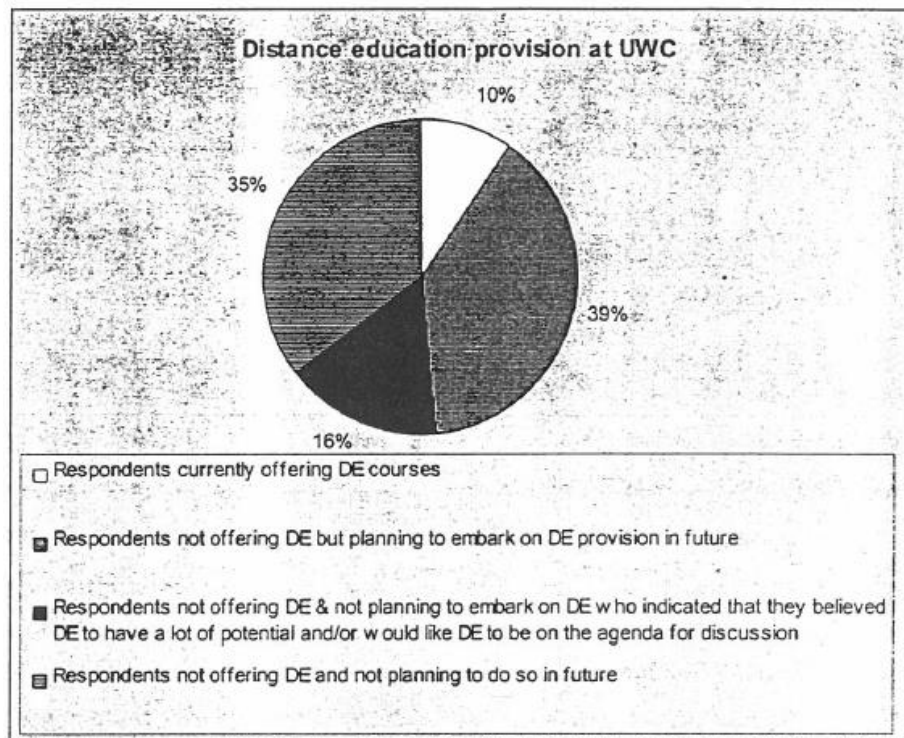


Figure 3

An important aim of this research project was to give an overview of the current provision of distance education at the University of the Western Cape. It was already indicated that the response to the distance education questionnaire was fairly high at 37,5% with 10% of the respondents indicating that they are currently offering distance education courses. Closer scrutiny of the questionnaires, however, points to the fact that only a very small number of courses are currently offered through distance education. Only three of the respondents indicated that they are involved in distance education provision.

What did emerge from the survey was that quite a large number of departments at UWC are considering embarking on distance education provision. 46,7% percent of the respondents indicated that they are planning to offer courses through DE. The responses from a further 10%

indicated that whereas they are not currently planning to offer any courses through distance education they believe DE to have great potential as a method of delivery and/or would be very happy for DE to be put on an agenda for further discussion. The following responses illustrate this point:

But we would certainly like to put it on the agenda...

Potential for this exists at postgraduate level, but we do not as yet see our way clear to explore it further

We are open to the possibility [of DE] as part of the current planning process around the introduction of programmes in the Arts faculty, and in relation to the development of IT and media resources as teaching tools

Against the background of the current small provision of distance education but with a substantial number of respondents planning to introduce distance education courses, the report aims to reflect the aims and concerns of both those currently involved in DE and those planning to embark on DE provision. To this end, two of the in-depth interviews were conducted with staff involved in the delivery of DE courses, and a third with a staff member planning a distance education course.

In this section of the report, the distance education courses currently offered are briefly discussed. Attention is also focused on planned DE initiatives, with special attention paid to the exit level of these courses as this might shed some light on the areas in which planning for distance education are concentrated.

The focus then shifts to the motivations for embarking on distance education - not only those of departments currently involved in the delivery of courses through DE, but also of those who are planning to embark on distance education - and impediments to and opportunities for implementing distance education. Finally, based on the three interviews, a discussion on the role of the institution in supporting DE and the impact of national and regional initiatives on the provision of DE follows.

5.2 An overview of the current provision of distance education at the University of the Western Cape

Three departments indicated that they offer courses through distance education. The courses they offer are the following:

- *Advanced Diploma for Educators of Adults* offered by the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE)
- • Certificate Course for Educators of Adults offered by the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE)
- *B.Ed* offered by the Faculty of Education
- *M. Ch.D (Community Dentistry) & M.Sc (Dent)* offered by the Department of Community Dentistry

The enrolments on all five these courses are fairly small: 225 B.Ed students, 4 students in Community Dentistry, 120 students enrolled on CACE's certificate course for Educators of Adults and 23 students enrolled in the Advanced Diploma. Most of the learners on these courses are based in the Northern Cape and the Eastern Cape.

Looking at the exit levels of these courses, the current provision of distance education seems to be focused on post graduate courses and on non-mainstream diploma and certificate courses aimed at niche markets offered in regions where great need and demand for such courses are demonstrated.

5.3 A brief description of distance education initiatives at the University of the Western Cape

5.3.1 Course materials

It is evident from both the questionnaires and the interviews that the materials used in DE courses are mostly print-based. Where donor funding could be obtained, materials were specifically designed for distance learning. In other cases, contact course materials were adapted for distance education. Respondents were in general positive about the notion of using and adapting existing courseware (also from other institutions) but expressed some concern in terms of materials produced for countries in the northern hemisphere and the fact that such materials need to be adapted and modified for local learners.

5.3.2 Use of technology

Very limited use of technology is made on most of the courses. This can be ascribed to the fact that learners from rural areas - the target audience of most of these courses - do not have access to any other than the most basic of technologies. Telephonic consultation with the lecturer was available in most cases. In the few cases where learners did have access to technologies, respondents reported that e-mail, fax and sometimes teleconferencing technologies were used.

Respondents indicated that they would like to introduce more technologies to the course, such as audio and video tapes. Developing web sites, using the Internet and interactive broadcasts are in the pipeline, although it is in most cases not perceived to be a realistic goal for the near future.

5.3.3 Course cost and funding

Respondents indicated that donor funding for materials development contributed a great deal to making it possible to offer the course through DE. In cases where funding - or adequate funding - was not available, course materials for face-to-face teaching were adapted and module options rationalised as strategies to minimise costs.

Cost details were not always available.¹² In one case, however, a respondent indicated that although the department had only a very small number of learners in a specific region, they are breaking even in terms of cost.

5.3.4 *Course evaluation*

There was strong evidence from the interviews that course evaluation procedures had been built in with course design. All three of the respondents interviewed indicated that the courses they offer through DE had been evaluated by external evaluators or that such evaluation exercises are planned. Students are also involved in course evaluation and students' responses are fed back into the planning of the course for the next year.

5.3.5 *Access requirements*

Respondents indicated that access requirements on the courses offered through distance education were, in general, limited to the absolute minimum and much more flexible than the requirements for the face-to-face equivalent of the course, where applicable. In one course, learners need only to have standard 8 pass. One respondent said that relaxing access requirements did have an impact on the quality of the learners and that the department had to provide substantial support to students. A staff member closely involved with the development of a course to be offered through distance education said that the course - which is offered on a post graduate level - is designed around learners with different skills and different needs and provision is therefore for flexible exit points.

¹² From both the resource-based learning questionnaires and interviews it transpired that in most departments the different cost items of a course are not costed separately and that budgeting and costing activities take place on departmental level rather than on the level of a single course. For example, all the materials printed by a department for different courses goes off against a single departmental printing budget. This makes it impossible to determine the costs related to a single course.

5.4 Planned distance education initiatives at the University of the Western Cape

Current provision of distance education at UWC is focused mainly on offering post graduate courses and non-mainstream certificate and diploma courses targeted at niche markets. In terms of planned DE initiatives, the trend seems to be the same. Details of seventeen courses that respondents are planning to offer through DE were obtained from the questionnaires. Of these, seven are on a post graduate level. Certificate, undergraduate diploma and foundation courses is the second biggest category. This category includes language acquisition courses and a course in computer literacy.

Figure 4 represents this graphically.

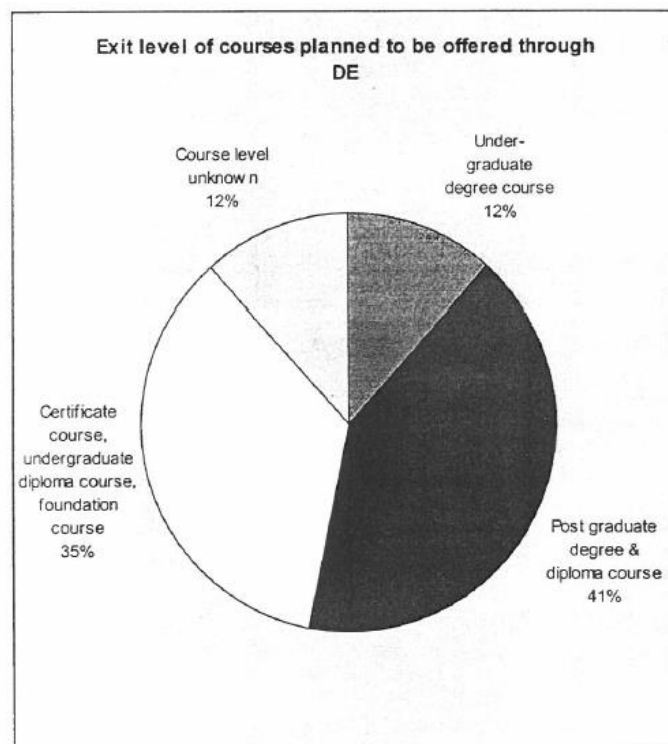


Figure 4

It should be noted, however, not all of the seventeen courses identified by respondents as planned DE initiatives should be regarded to be 'pure' distance education. Some of these courses

are offered in the 'grey' areas between off-campus resource-based learning and on-campus resource-based learning, community-based and community outreach programmes:

The following extracts from the questionnaires illustrate this:

This [offering the course] is one way to empower the community. The idea is to present a programme via one of the community radio stations...

A part time / Saturday distance education ... course is planned for pilot in 1998

Although [the department] is not involved directly in distance education, it uses a combination of residential instruction supported with outreach for its certificate course in ...

This fact should be kept in mind when the number of departments considering to embark on DE provision is analysed.

5.5 Motivations for embarking on distance education

All three departments currently offering courses through distance education indicated that **increasing access** was the primary motivation underlying the decision to *offer* courses through DE. In terms of secondary motivations, respondents cited the following considerations as important influences on the decision to embark on DE:

- To make provision for post graduate training needs;
- To attract more students;
- To re-establish a presence for UWC in other regions, i.e. to enhance the university's public profile;
- To enable the delivery of courses in a medium of instruction other than English, e.g. offering a course to learners in the Northern Cape in Afrikaans;
- To create a larger pool of learners to feed into Masters' programmes;
- To provide for in-service training opportunities.

The motivations for considering to embark on DE of those departments that are not currently offering any courses through DE but are planning to do so in the future are rather diverse but mainly centre around the following themes:

- To provide access;
- To attract more students;
- To provide for post graduate training needs;
- To meet an important demand in areas where other courses are not available (niche markets).

Other important issues identified by the respondents that impacted on the decision to embark on DE are:

- the need to make provision for 'weaker' students: distance education is seen to be able to provide a slow-stream option;
- the problem of large classes in the face-to-face situation: some respondents expressed the hope that offering a course through distance education might encourage some face-to-face students to study through DE;
- the technology of distance education: a number of respondents stated that they have an interest in IT technologies and want to see how these work in a distance education context.

Respondents also indicated that partnership agreements with government, the private sector or and other educational institutions, and donor funding for materials development positively impacted on the decision to embark on DE.

The motivations for departments planning to embark on distance education should perhaps be further explored in another study. Although little supporting evidence in the case of the distance education survey was available, some evidence from the resource-based learning survey suggested that distance education and resource-based learning initiatives were sometimes regarded by departments to be survival strategies. Departments may consider offering DE or RBL courses in niche areas - mostly non-credited carrying courses - hoping that the increase in student numbers could help to support the formal academic courses.

5.6. Impediments to implementing distance education

5.6.1 Issues of administration and infrastructure

As a result of the fact that the number of students on the DE courses currently offered are relatively small, departments offering these courses could - within the constraints of their existing infrastructures - provide administrative support to DE students. Both respondents currently offering DE courses and respondents planning to introduce DE agreed that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to continue to provide this kind of administrative support once student numbers on courses and/or the number of courses offered through DE increase. Respondents currently offering distance education courses stated that there is a specific limit to the number of students they can accommodate within the current infrastructure, that is 40 students in the case of the Advanced Diploma and 300 students on the B. Ed. Programme.

In terms of providing large-scale distance education with large numbers of students enrolling on courses, there was general consensus that this could not be embarked upon without changes to the current administrative system of the university as a whole. On this issue, a respondent remarked:

Neither my department nor the university is organised or resourced to provide this kind of administrative support. A special unit will most definitely be needed

Respondents highlighted the following as key realities of DE provision:

- A large secretarial infrastructure is required to administer a DE course;
- To offer DE requires a restructuring and reorganisation of the existing administration and administrative procedures;
- In planning a DE course, academic staff have to think of delivery in a very detailed way, thus becoming more closely involved with the day-to-day administration of the course;
- The logistics of supporting learners that live remote from campus is extremely complex. One respondent reflected on a situation where the examination arrangements for his students had been finalised with great effort (small groups of students had to write in a whole range of venues) when the report came that there was a snowfall and some of the exam venues were inaccessible.
- Distance education is out of sync with the normal university calendar which is illustrated by the following two examples:

Students' applications are received after the university's closing date for applications; The registration date for DE students is often after registrations for face-to-face students have closed.

5.6.2 Resourcing arrangements

Most of the respondents remarked that offering a course (or courses) through distance education was a very labour-intensive venture. Departments in general reported that they do not have the staff capacity for materials development. Even in cases where the development of materials was externally funded, respondents said that distance education delivery made huge demands on staff capacity. Lecturers have to learn to adapt to new strategies of teaching, while at the same time becoming more involved in the administration of the course. Most respondents agreed that if the number of courses offered through DE by their relevant departments is to increase, additional academic and support staff will have to be appointed.

5.7 Institutional support required for supporting distance education at the University of the Western Cape

5.7.1 Developing institutional policy on distance education

The need for UWC to make a commitment to distance education on a policy level was highlighted by some respondents as an important first step in supporting the development of DE courses.

5.7.2 Restructuring administration and infrastructure

It was suggested that staff in central administration should take on responsibility for registration of DE students *or* that a separate registration unit could be formed to work exclusively with DE students as it will put in place effective systems for dealing with DE students on an institution-wide level, and relieve departments from the immense administrative burden.

5.7.3 Devising appropriate staff appraisal mechanisms

Respondents felt strongly that distance education (and course development for distance education) should be regarded as mainstream work to ensure that there are promotion opportunities for staff involved in these ventures. A respondent noted that innovative activities that take place on the fringe, and are regarded to be marginal and not part of the university's core academic programme, are not often the basis for promotion.

5.7.4 Providing for professional development needs

Respondents expressed a need for training in a number of issues relating to distance education in a workshop format. Issues identified for workshops are the following:

- providing learner support (e.g. how to conduct telephonic consultations);
- developing and putting in place learner support systems for distance education; and
- planning distance education programmes.

5.8 The impact of regional and national initiatives and support for distance education on DE provision at the University of the Western Cape

Respondents remarked that although there are not many distance education initiatives in the Western Cape region, areas in which closer collaboration between different providers can be forged, both on a regional and national level, include the following:

- materials development;
- professional development workshops;
- forming a support network for DE practitioners.

The issue of competition between the five higher education institutions in the Western Cape was seen to be a barrier to collaboration in the region. A respondent described his experiences of collaboration in the region as 'very bitter'.

Respondents also stressed the importance of support for distance education from government. A respondent stated that it is of utmost importance that policies that support DE provision be put in place on national level:

We have to create policies and an environment where distance education can be valued and be seen as a real strategy through which we can provide access to people who had been denied the privilege of tertiary education

5.9 Staff perceptions on distance education and its future at the University of the Western Cape

5.9.1 *Reflecting on the success of the delivery of courses through distance education*

Respondents offering courses using distance education methods describe the delivery of these courses as very successful. They seem to agree on the fact that their expectations about what they thought distance education could do, which is to open up access to the university, has most definitely been met.

Practitioners of distance education agreed that the University of the Western Cape should offer more courses through DE. Some of the interviewees expressed the opinion that there is an immense need for courses in the Northern and Eastern Cape, and that ideally UWC should offer a whole range of courses through DE. It was suggested that UWC do a needs assessment to see what kinds of programmes are most needed. A respondent said that the university should look at offering courses in areas where it has a distinctive contribution to make. Reflecting on his experience, a staff member involved in DE at UWC said that he finds DE to be especially successful at a post graduate level where students already have some experience of studying and have developed their own style of learning. Another respondents reported that distance education does seem to present some limitations for deep intellectual engagement and development and that this should be taken into account in making decisions on the kinds of courses to be offered through DE.

Two of the three respondents interviewed said that the institutional mission requires UWC to seriously consider embarking on distance education. Another respondent said that because of the distribution of resources in South Africa, present inequalities will persist unless there is a move into distance education. For this reason he believes there is an imperative for UWC to become involved in DE provision.

All three the interviewees, however, stressed that offering distance education courses takes a lot of planning that requires support from the university and cannot be undertaken in a haphazard way. A respondent warned that care should be taken not to 'cheat' distance education students in terms of the quality of the courses or the quality of the qualification and that great care therefore should be taken in the planning of the course and the development of the materials. Also, respondents stated that distance education at UWC should not be 'correspondence education' but

should have a resource-based learning approach in which contact with the teacher is an important component.

5.9.2 *Shifts in staff approaches*

Respondents reported that embarking on distance education did have an impact on staff approaches to teaching in the sense that lecturers had to think of teaching and learning in very different ways. A respondent said that she had to think much more closely about the way in which learners learn and how learning takes place in distance education. This impacted on the way she teaches. Also, two of the respondents, who themselves were involved in the writing of materials, reflected on the fact that in DE you cannot just 'say' something to learners but actually have to write it down. This had an important impact on the quality of materials produced as it helped to focus attention on the writing process itself, thereby highlighting the importance of issues such as language usage.

VI Findings and discussion: Resource-based learning at the University of the Western Cape

6.1 Introductory remarks

The response rate to the questionnaire on resource-based learning was equally satisfactory at 37,5 %. Thirty-three questionnaires were returned, reporting on thirty-one courses offered by twenty-eight departments. Two respondents indicated that their respective departments do not make substantial use of designed learning materials and resources.

Interviews were conducted with seven academics involved in the delivery of courses in which extensive use of designed learning materials and resources are made. Interviewees were from the following faculties:

- Arts;
- Economic and Management Sciences;
- Natural Sciences;
- Dentistry.

The exit levels of the seven courses staff were interviewed about are as follows:

- One post graduate course;
- One foundation course;
- Five undergraduate courses.

6.2 An overview of the current provision of resource-based learning at the University of the Western Cape

94 % of the respondents indicated that they do make extensive use of designed learning materials and resources in a course or courses. It is, however, important to note that the kinds of materials and resources used and the way in which these materials are integrated into the course vary greatly across the different programmes .

In most of the cases, these materials are either print-based supplementary notes, course readers and study guides, and/or computer technology.

In the questionnaires, respondents reported on thirty-one courses in which extensive use of designed learning materials and resources are made. Of these thirty-one courses, three are offered at more than one level, i.e. a single course is offered both on third year level and as a foundation course for an honours programme. Figure 5 graphically represents the level at which these RBL courses are offered¹³.

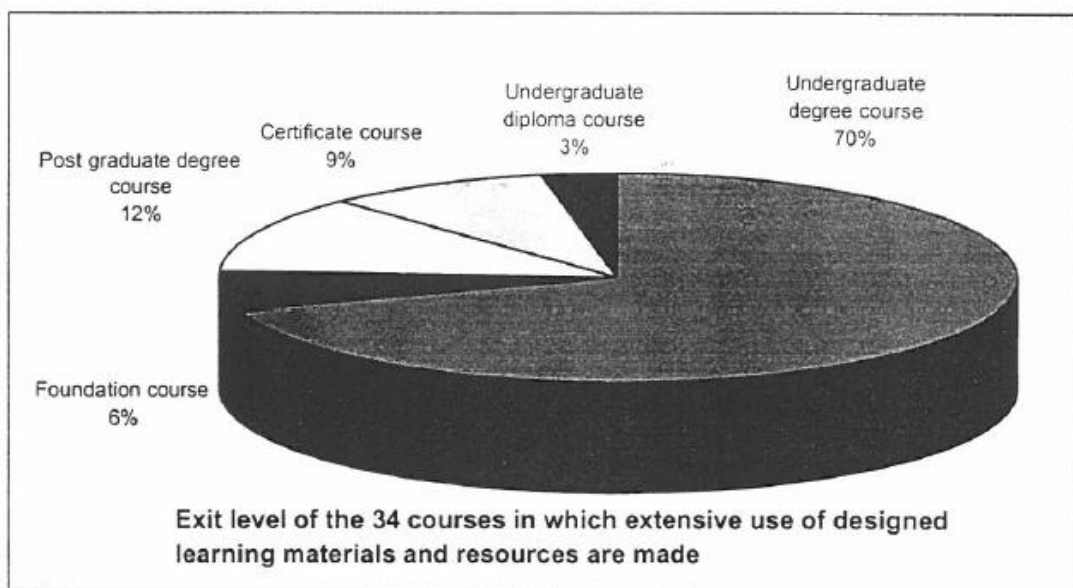


Figure 5

¹³ Note that because of the fact that three of the course are offered on two levels each, Figure 5 represents the spread of 34 courses and not 31 courses across the different exit levels

6.3 A brief description of resource-based learning initiatives at the University of the Western Cape

6.3.1 Materials development

The strategies for course design and materials development varied greatly across the different courses.

- In the interviews, three respondents indicated that they themselves were entirely responsible for the course design and materials development, although the department was involved in setting the parameters for course content. A further two respondents indicated that whereas all staff in the department were closely involved in the course design process, an individual in the department was assigned the task of developing the appropriate materials.

Two respondents indicated that materials were developed through a team approach whereby different staff members were responsible for developing different modules and one or two staff members were appointed as course coordinators.

Those using the team approach reported on the great benefits of this method of course development. The close involvement of all staff in the process seems to have had a positive impact on staff morale. Also, the team approach fostered better understanding of the course content of each course and the way the different course or modules combine to make up a full course or programme. In cases where individuals took on most of the responsibilities themselves, they sometimes reported that they received little support from colleagues and felt that they were swimming against the tide.

Something else that emerged from the interviews was the importance of the fact that those responsible for teaching the course should be involved in developing the materials. Drawing on experience, two respondents indicated that it was problematic if researchers write materials and do not involve the teaching staff in piloting the modules.

6.3.2 *The use of existing materials*

Staff indicated that they do make use of existing materials. but expressed concern both about the suitability to local audiences of materials produced elsewhere and issues of copyright .

6.3.3 *Print-based materials*

Most of the respondents indicated that they make substantial use of print-based materials on the course. These materials include:

- specially compiled readers;
- textbooks;
- supplementary notes;
- workbooks;
- study guides containing course outline and assessment details.

6.3.4 *The use of technology*

The following technologies are currently used in the 31 courses reported on in the questionnaires:

Video cassettes:

22 respondents reported that they make use of video resources in the course. In some cases. students are involved in producing videos, or practical sessions are taped and then students reflect on this at a later stage.

Computer technologies:

15 respondents indicated that they make use of different computer technologies in the course. The use of the technologies range from computer-aided instruction to computer tests and include the use of CD Rom and multimedia packages

Audio cassettes:

10 respondents said that the use of audio cassettes is integrated into the course.

Internet:

4 respondents currently make use of the Internet in courses they offer. More respondents indicated that they would like to incorporate this technology into the course once the facility is available to students.

Electronic mail:

5 respondents reported that students communicate with each other and with the lecturers making use of electronic mail. In one particularly innovative course, students from an undergraduate class at UWC were linked up via e-mail to students studying on a another continent.

6.3.5 *Contact time*

It was not possible to derive from the questionnaires whether respondents actually cut down on the number of formal lectures when they introduced the use of designed learning materials and resources. From the interviews it transpired that the majority of the respondents did not reduce the number of formal lectures, but rather introduced more contact time - in the form of tutorial classes and practicals - as add-ons to the existing contact time .

Based on information obtained from the interviews, it seems that staff in general did not consider cutting down on contact time as an option. The most important reason for this seems to be that staff are of the opinion that the profile of the students they teach is such that these learners need all the teaching opportunities they can get. Another possibility may be that staff either believe themselves - or think that colleagues might do so - that cutting down on the number of formal lectures signifies a decline in the quality of teaching.

6.3.6 *Learner support mechanisms*

An interesting feature of the tutoring systems that the different departments have in place is that three of the seven respondents interviewed indicated that they themselves and other staff from the department take tutorial classes in addition to their normal teaching duties. The benefits from this approach seem to be enormous: respondents reported that staff seem to be much more in touch with the ways in which learning takes place in tutorial classes and are better prepared to develop materials for tutorial classes. Of course, the additional

teaching load adds a lot of strain to staff who already have a heavy teaching burden. The majority of respondents interviewed also indicated that they employ only post graduate students as tutors.

With only two exceptions out of the seven staff members interviewed, respondents reported that the student tutor ratio is something between 20-30:1.

In each of the seven courses opportunities for one-on-one consultation with lecturers or tutors are available. Respondents reported that learners do in general make use of these. In addition to the normal tutorials, one respondent offers small-group tutorials to students identified to be at risk of failing.

6.3.7 Course cost and funding

47% of the departments offering courses making use of designed learning materials and resources indicated that they received funding and/or resources to support components of the course development process in addition to normal university funding. These resources come from funding agencies, government departments and university-based initiatives such as the Academic Development Centre.

Figure 6 illustrates the overall spread of different kinds of funding and resources secured by these departments. Note that some departments secured funding and resources from more than one source earmarked for different activities.

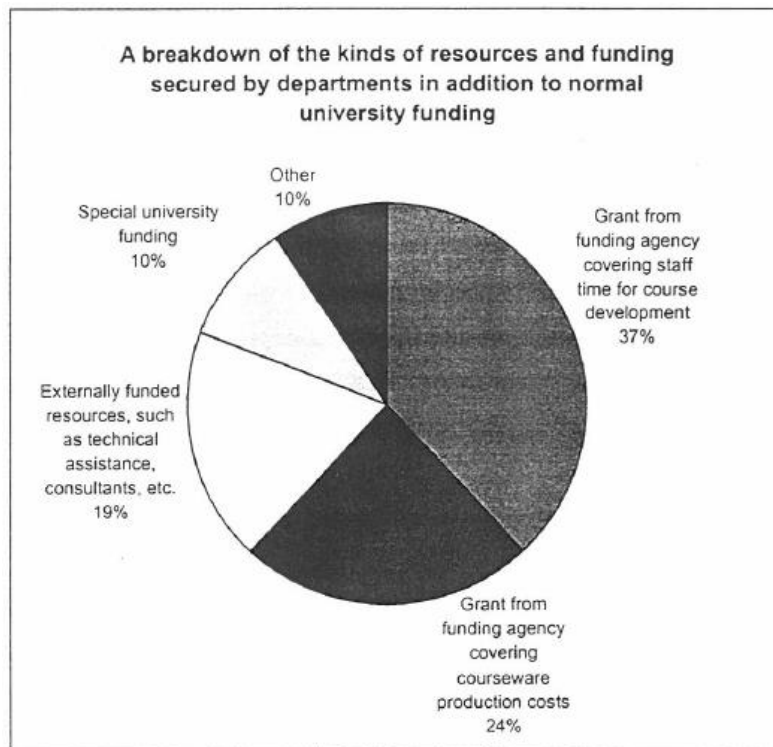


Figure 6

53% of the respondents indicated that they received only the normal university funding for development of the course.

In the section on distance education, it was explained that cost issues are mostly dealt with on a departmental level and not on the level of the single course. Also, staff time spent on course development, for example, is not regarded to be a cost item as it is seen to be part of the normal duties of academic staff. For these reasons, most respondents could not really comment on the cost implications the move to resource-based learning have had, other than to say that RBL seems to put strain on the printing budget. One of the interviewees remarked that costing courses are not part of 'the ethos of the university' and that this will need to change if the university wants to make an informed decision about a move to RBL.

6.3.8 *Part time students and evening classes*

The respondents interviewed indicated that to a large extent the courses they designed for full time face-to-face students were inappropriate for part-time students or evening classes.

The main reasons for this seem to be the fact that it is difficult for these students to attend tutorial classes and practicals, the fact that departments have problems in providing assistance in the computers laboratories after-hours, and the fact that equipment such as video projectors is not easily available for use in the evenings. In very few cases, staff indicated that they had to adapt the course to suit the needs of part time students.

Taking everything into account. on the basis of the interviews. it could be said that most of the resource-based learning initiatives are designed to suit the needs of full time students and that the possibilities of resource-based learning as a strategy for supporting part time students have not as yet been fully explored.

6.3.9 *Course evaluation*

Five of the seven staff members interviewed indicated that they regarded the RBL course they are offering in 1997 to be a pilot phase, and that they would evaluate the success of the course at the end of the year. A significant number of the responses from the questionnaires confirmed that respondents do regard the first year in which they offer the course to be a pilot and that the course would be evaluated to assess its success.

In terms of formal evaluation procedures. only a few of the respondents said that they had developed evaluation procedures prior to the development of the course materials. In most cases, staff indicated that they would reflect on the course at a departmental meeting at the end of the year.

All of the interviewees indicated that learners are involved in course evaluation processes. Most of the departments allow for formal evaluation, making use of a self-administered questionnaires, at the end of each module. Staff also rely on feedback from tutors at weekly meetings.

6.4 **Motivations for embarking on resource-based learning**

In the questionnaire. respondents were asked to plot six possible motivations for embarking on resource-based learning on a four point scale. The next section of this report evaluates the response to each of the six motivations, and then moves on to explore in greater detail other factors and motivations that played an important role in the decision to embark on RBL, which transpired to some extent

from the questionnaires but mostly from the in-depth interviews.

..Figure 6 shows the overall response to the questionnaire on the question of considerations for embarking on resource-based learning.

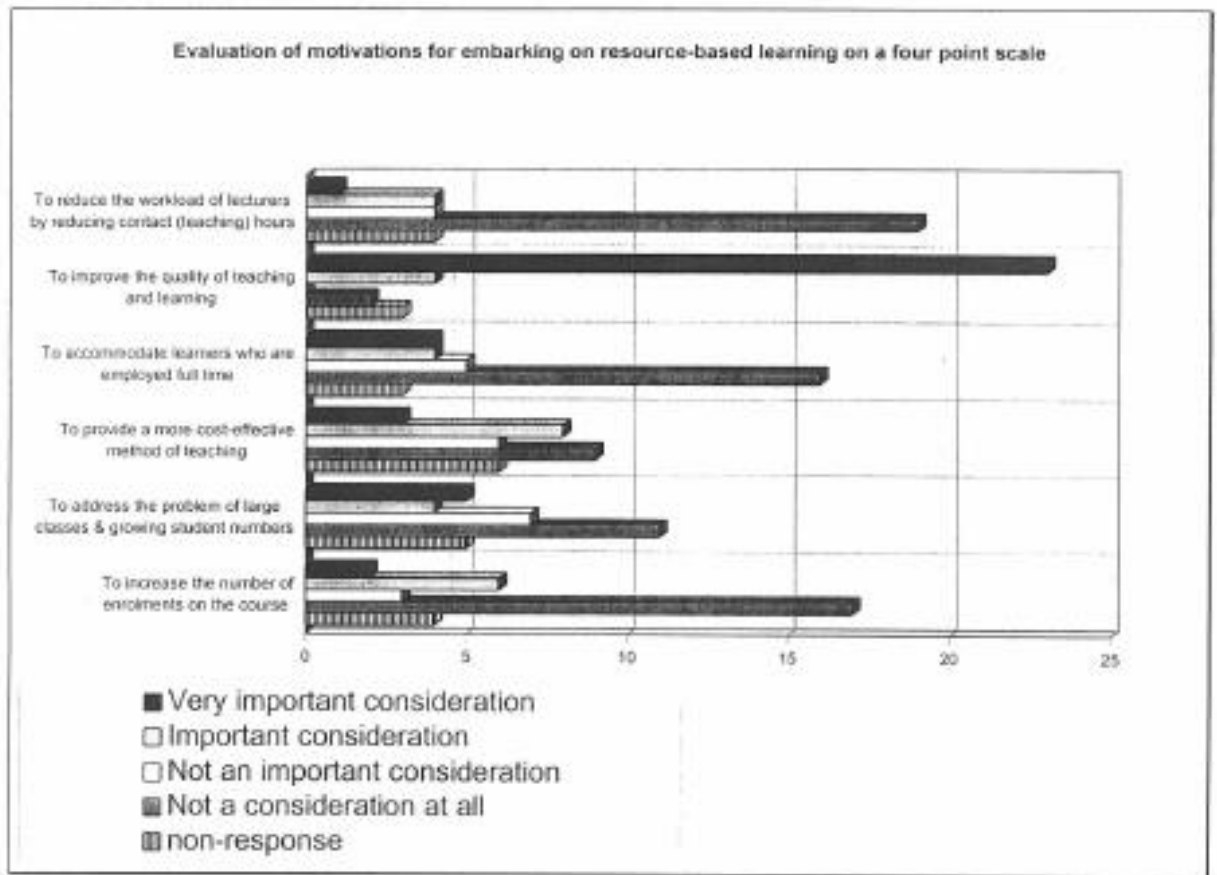


Figure 7

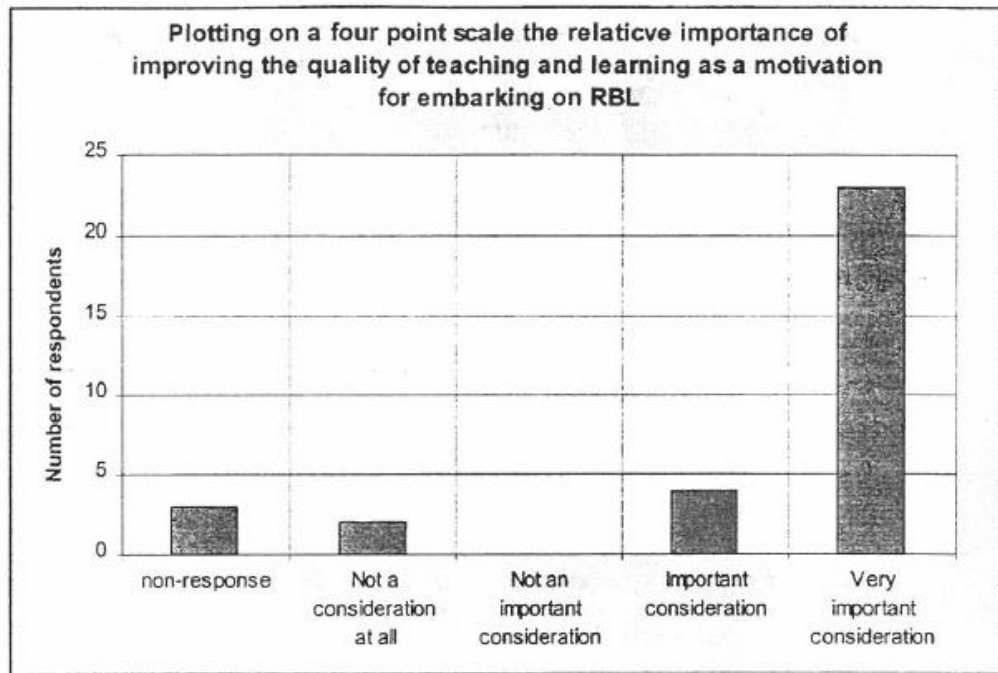


Figure 8

On the four point scale, the most of the respondents (71,8%) indicated by far that improving the quality of teaching and learning was a very important - if not the only - motivation for introducing designed learning materials and resources to the course.

This trend was confirmed by the in-depth interviews. In the questionnaires and in the interviews respondents identified a number of issues which they believed played an important role in the decision to review current teaching practices aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning. These are the following:

- The need to do something about massive failure rates;
- The problems of teaching large classes;
- The fact that a large number of learners are under-prepared for university study and the subsequent need to provide learners with foundation skills.

In one example, lecturers decided to introduce the use of resources and designed learning materials, because using a single textbook seems to foster rote-learning habits.

In interviews with some of the staff involved in RBL it transpired that respondents see the group work, which is an integral part of an RBL approach, as a very important part of the teaching strategy. Students learn a lot from each other (the way in which will acquire skills once they are in the workplace) and this has a positive impact on a student's chances of success.

Respondents were asked whether they are considering introducing resource-based learning strategies to other courses offered by their departments. Some of the responses to this question indicate the importance of improving the quality of teaching and learning as a motivation for embarking on RBL:

To shift the responsibility for learning to the student

To enhance teaching efficiency and learning skills

Students tend to become more motivated and enjoy the subject more, begin to appreciate [the subject] in a much wider context, and think much more about their own learning, i.e. there is a holistic improvement of the quality of teaching and learning

6.4.2 To increase the number of enrolments on the course

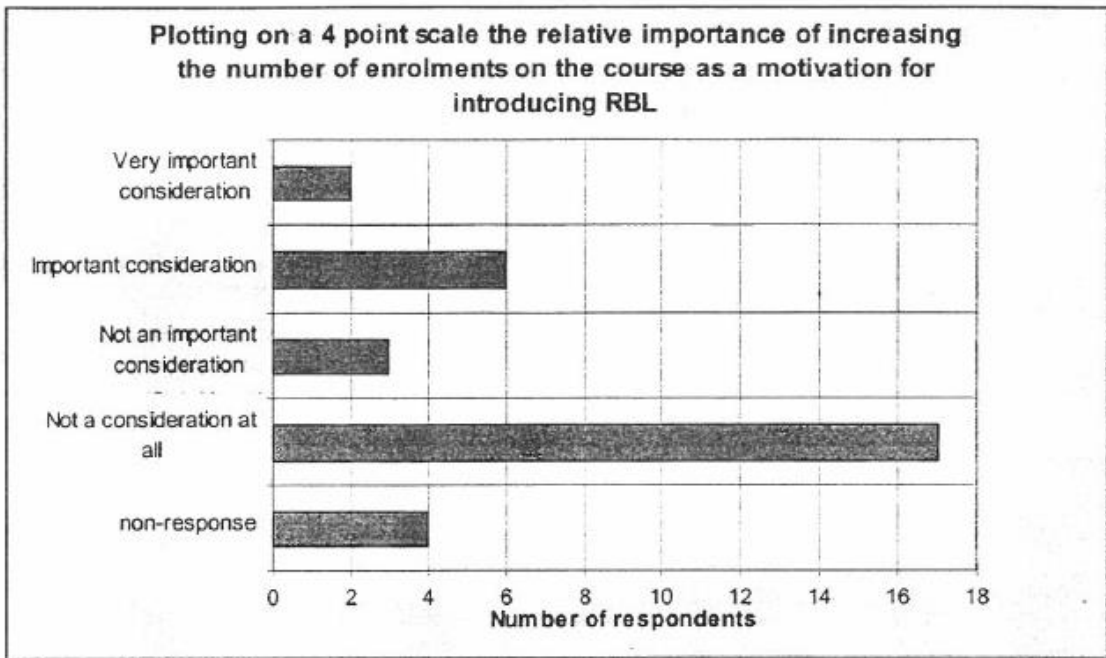


Figure 9

It was succinctly clear from both the interviews and the questionnaires that increasing student numbers on a course played little or no role in the decision to embark on RBL. In very few cases - especially where courses are offered on a post graduate level - increasing student numbers were cited as motivation, but in these cases the issue mostly centred around increasing access to post graduate studies.

6.4.3 *To address the problem of large classes and growing student numbers*

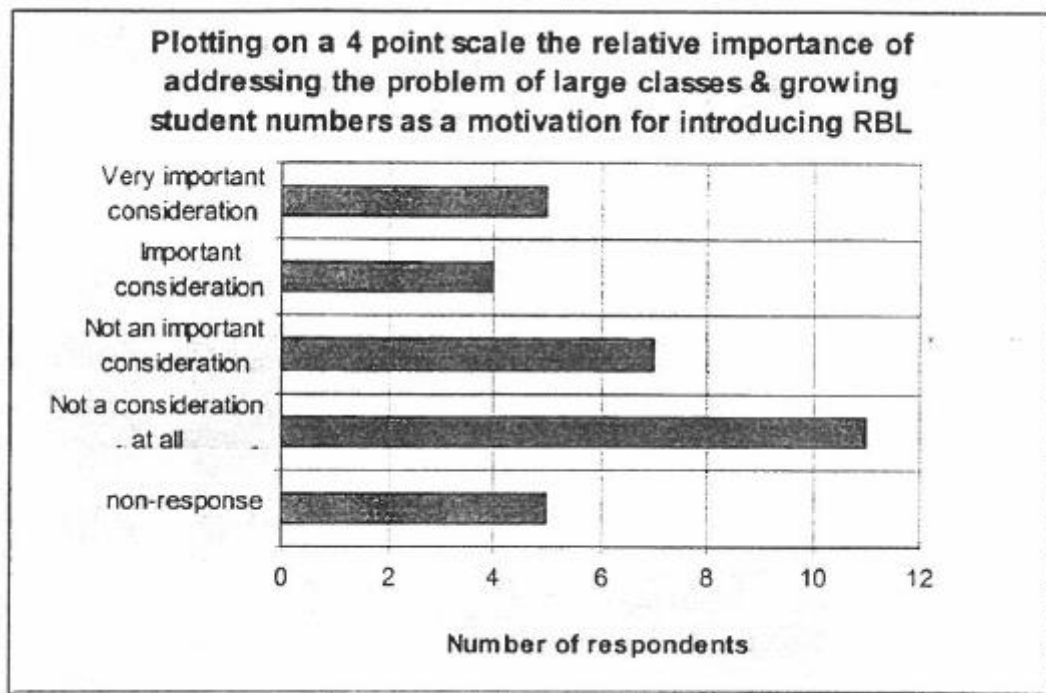


Figure 10

Only 28% of the respondents indicated that the problem of teaching large classes influenced the decision to shift to resource-based learning strategies. It does seem as if the problem of teaching large classes is regarded by most respondents as just one factor out of many that impacted on students' performance and therefore necessitated a review of teaching and learning practices to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Of those that indicated that large-class teaching did play an important role in introducing RBL, the following response is a typical example:

Students have special needs & large classes don't cater for those

6.4.4 To provide a more cost-effective method of teaching

6.4.5

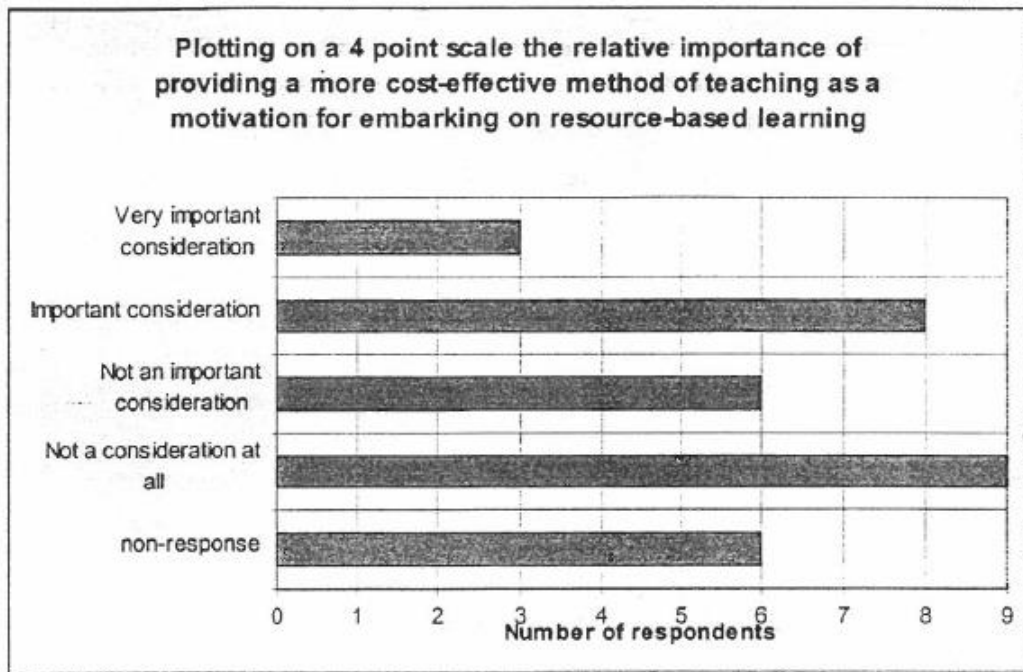


Figure 11

Respondents interpreted this statement in two very different ways. Some responded to the notion of whether the desire to provide a more cost-effective teaching strategy for the department (and university) was an important motivation for introducing RBL, whereas a substantial number of others responded to this statement as being motivation to provide more cost-effective teaching for students, thereby focusing on issues such as the purchasing of textbooks.

Firstly, those respondents working with the notion of cost-effectiveness for the department indicated that resource-based learning was not a more cost-effective method of teaching. One respondent reported that to produce (print) the materials for just one course utilised more 75% of the department's budget for printing.

It was already indicated that in *very* few cases did departments or course coordinators have a clear idea of the costs of a specific course. Issues such as *staff* time for materials development is in general not costed separately or taken into account in any budgeting process as it is regarded to be part of normal teaching duties. Because of this, comments on issues of cost-effectiveness mostly centred on the expenses of printing materials and the purchasing of computer software packages.

Respondents focusing on cost-effectiveness for students noted that students come from disadvantaged backgrounds and do not have the resources to purchase expensive textbooks. The following comments from the questionnaires illustrate this:

Readers are produced because textbooks are very expensive

Textbooks have priced themselves out of the market. $\frac{5}{6}$ of our undergraduate classes cannot afford to buy + R100 textbooks. Even core readers costing R20 are not bought by approximately 25% of the class

Although these respondents indicated that providing materials to students at reduced cost was a primary motivation for developing and introducing designed learning materials and resources, this was usually linked to a further motivation to improve the quality of teaching and learning. If students do not have access to textbooks because these are too expensive and if the course is focused on that textbook it follows that such students will have little chance of success.

6.4.6 To accommodate learners that are employed full time

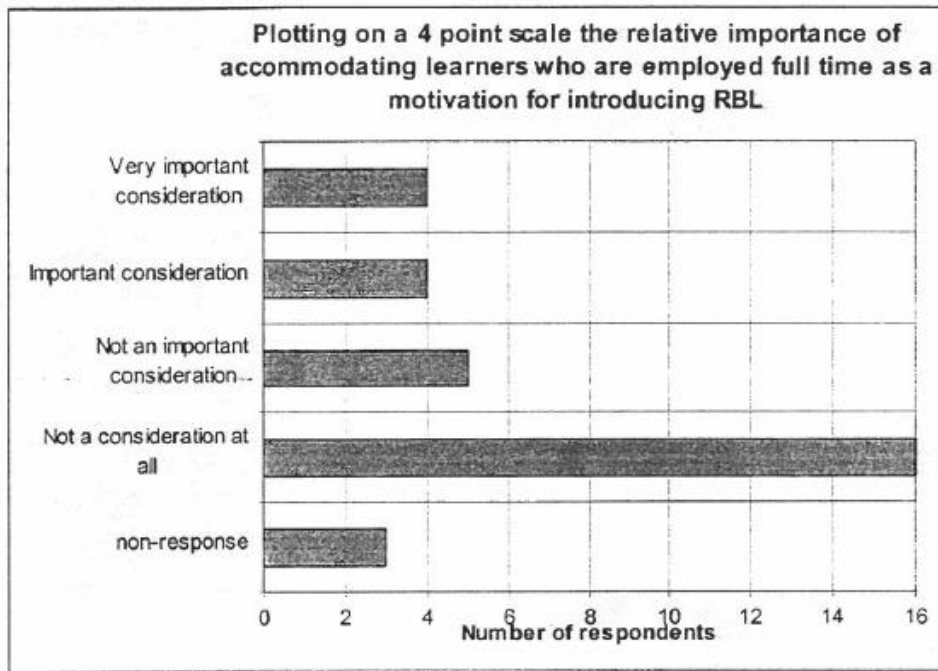


Figure 12

25% of the respondents rated this to be an important motivation or very important motivation for embarking on RBL. Respondents pointed out that it was not only the desire to cater for students that are employed full time that informed the decision to make use of designed learning materials and resources, but that they also wanted to accommodate students who have class clashes, notably those who are repeaters.

Few of the respondents remarked on the potential of resource-based learning strategies for part time students. One respondent did, however, touch on this issue in the following way:

*Many part time students need access to upgrading / further specialist qualifications.
Full time employees also prefer this method*

Another respondent explained that resource-based learning materials could also easily be adapted for distance learning purposes, and that this was a motivation for embarking on RBL. This respondent stated that UWC needs to seriously consider offering more distance education courses as it would open up access to the university. The respondent believed resource-based learning to be a sound strategy for achieving that goal over a period of time.

6.4.7 To reduce the increased workload of lecturers by reducing contact time

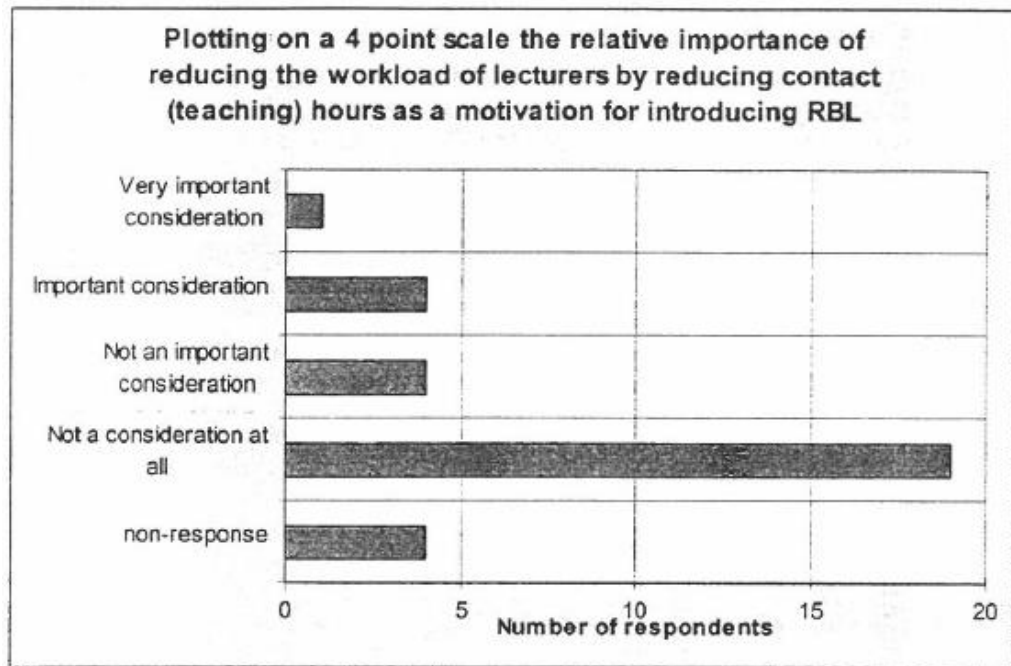


Figure 13

Reaction to this statement was very strong. 59% of the respondents indicated that this was not an important motivation in the decision to embark on RBL. 71% said that this was not a consideration at all or not an important consideration. Remarks from the questionnaires and discussions during the interviews indicated that, overwhelmingly, staff felt that shifting to resource-based learning actually increased their workload in very real terms.

What transpired from the interviews was that staff in general did not cut down on any contact time when introducing a resource-based learning approach. Practicals, tutorials and computer lab sessions are mostly introduced as add-ons or supplementary to the formal lecturing schedule. To some extent this accounts for the increase in workload. The reasons for this are discussed in more detail in section 6.3.5.

It was furthermore interesting to note that, when interviewed, some of the staff members who indicated that reducing the number of contact hours - and thereby their workload - was an important motivation for introducing RBL explained that their expectations in this regard were not met.

In the few cases where staff indicated that their workload did not actually increase but remained very much on the same level, there have been shifts in the way in which staff spend their time. Respondents cited the increased administrative responsibilities and the introduction of tutorials and practical classes as time-consuming elements of their work. Also, they reported that students seem to demonstrate a greater need for one-on-one consultation in this teaching model.

Only one of the seven people interviewed indicated that his workload has actually decreased as a result of the resources he developed.

6.4.8 Other motivations

Other motivations and considerations impacting on the decision to introduce designed learning materials and resources that emerged from the questionnaires and interviews were the following:

6.4.8.1 To produce appropriate and relevant materials

A theme that came through time and again was the need for materials to be written for a specific audience. A respondent captured the essence of this concern when saying that "materials that are appropriate for a UCT student may not be appropriate for a UWC student". Another concern was that existing materials and textbooks do not adequately reflect South African realities and therefore are not relevant or appropriate in a South African context. The following response illustrates this:

Home grown texts are cheaper (in the long run) and "relevant" to local audiences

In some cases, respondents indicated that they had to develop their own materials as theirs is a specialised field in which materials are not freely available.

6.4.8.2 To meet the demands of industry and to enhance students' employability

A number of respondents reflected on the fact that students from UWC have to compete with students from other institutions of higher learning in the Western Cape. Staff involved in resource-based learning initiatives felt that the use of different kinds of media as well as the activities that accompany these materials are aimed at guiding students to develop new skills. This, in turn, will enhance students' employability. Some respondents highlighted the fact that students should be trained to meet the changing demands of industry. In this respect, the importance of students being IT literate was emphasised as one of the major motivations for introducing especially technological resources to the course:

The course fosters the development of career-related skills and knowledge (more applied knowledge; less abstract approach)

Students need to be exposed to technology that are used in the subject areas

6.4.8.3 To make the course more interesting and enjoyable

More than half of the respondents interviewed indicated that it was an important consideration for them to make their courses more interesting and enjoyable for students. This issue also came out strongly in the questionnaires. The general opinion seems to be that exciting and interesting courses motivate students.

- The following comments from questionnaires and interviews highlight this:

Resources, if used correctly, bring life and excitement into the course

By varying the instructional medium I hope to make the course more interesting.

6.4.8.4 To cater for student diversity

Student diversity was most definitely a major motivation for introducing RBL. Much more than the problem of large-class teaching, it seems that the problem of teaching students at different levels was a major obstacle forcing departments to develop new teaching strategies. According to respondents, a major advantage of the use of designed learning materials and resources is that it facilitates self-paced learning. The following are some of respondents' comments on student diversity:

The major principle for me is that different students learn in different ways. I want to have a range of learning situations: lectures, tuts, workbooks, textbooks, CSE, etc. so that each student can use the resources which suit his learning style

Students from disparate backgrounds can be given the opportunity to learn at their own pace and to "catch up" with others in the class

6.5 Issues impacting positively on resource-based learning provision

6.5.1 Institutional support

A number of respondents indicated that the mission statement of the University of the Western Cape had positively influenced the decision to adopt a resource-based learning strategy. An interviewee said that whereas the university has for a long time been committed to opening up access to the institution - as expressed in the previous mission statement - it is specifically the move to emphasising access with success in the new mission statement that provides the incentive for embarking on resource-based learning.

6.5.2 Positive influence of the ADC

Three of the seven interviewees indicated that the support they received from the Academic Development Centre played an important role in enabling them to offer the course making use of designed learning materials and resources.

They reported the support they received from the ADC to have been focused mostly on the following activities:

- the development of learner support structures - with staff from the ADC sometimes co-tutoring on courses;
- assistance with the design of the learning materials;
- course evaluation.

These respondents felt very positive about the support they received from ADC and expressed the hope that more money and staff will be made available to the ADC for these kinds of activities:

The course also receives a lot of support from ADC which has supported the tutorial programme in particular, but also researched the course more generally.

The Academic Development Centre (ADC) played a very important role since 1993

An interviewee stated that it was important that the university recognises that the Academic Development Centre should not only support, and money for academic development should not only be made available for, foundation and/or 'special' courses but that this kind of support should be extended to all mainstream courses, as all students are in need of academic development.

6.6 Impediments to adopting resource-based learning strategies

6.6.1 *Problems with the production and dissemination of materials*

Respondents identified difficulties with the production and dissemination of print materials as one of the key frustrations in implementing a resource-based learning approach. Problems identified include the following:

6.6.1.1 Print facilities

A significant number of the interviewees - supported by some responses from the questionnaires - stated that the production of materials was a major hassle. They complained that the printing capacity of the print department is too small and that the department cannot cope with the increased demand for print materials. As a result of this, materials are received late. A further problem is that materials for printing must be submitted to the printing department four months before the commencement of the course. This has serious implications for the ability of departments to evaluate and review their materials for the next year.

6.6.1.2 Warehousing of materials

In general, respondents indicated that where student numbers on courses are fairly small, the storing of print materials did not pose any difficulties. Staff teaching on courses with large numbers of students, however, did have difficulties in storing the materials, especially in cases where they tried to minimise printing costs by printing enough materials for two to three years.

6.6.1.3 Recovering costs

Departments making use of designed learning materials and resources, especially those making use primarily of print-materials, all reported that it put a huge strain on the department's printing budget. The issue of how to recover those costs seem to be an enormous headache for departments. An example of this is the case of a department that teaches large numbers of students made the decision to give away the course materials to students for free, as they did not have the administrative infrastructure to organise student payments.

A number of respondents expressed the hope that the university could assist in the recovery of costs for print materials by adding those amounts to the course fee or to students' accounts at central administration.

Another problem seems to be that respondents in general did not know how many students will enrol on a course in a specific year. Because of the printing schedule, decisions on the number of copies to be printed has to be taken months before actual registrations close. Departments do not know how to estimate the number of students on the course. The policy they seem to be following, is to ensure that they have enough materials available to accommodate a large number of students. If the student numbers do not meet the expectations, departments are left with large quantities of unused materials. This, of course, has important cost implications.

The fact that students do not have the resources to purchase textbooks was highlighted as a problem by many of the respondents. One of the strategies identified by departments to address this issue, is to purchase the textbooks and then to lease these at a nominal fee to students. Students pay a deposit - ranging from R20 to R30 - to lease the book for a year. At the end of they year they get approximately R10 of the deposit back if the return the book in good condition. This system does not only impose a heavy financial burden on departments, but also creates more administrative work. Some of the respondents expressed the hope that the university library could consider taking responsibility for performing this function as part of its service to students.

6.6.2 *Technological resources*

A majority of respondents indicated - both in the questionnaires and in the interviews - that issues around technological resources impacted very negatively on resource-based learning initiatives. The central themes are the following:

6.6.2.1 Students' level of computer literacy

Respondents stated that students' level of computer literacy impacted negatively on RBL because of the fact that students are unable to make use of computer technologies without assistance. This meant that tutors had to be employed and trained to support students in the use of computer technologies. Administrating and organising the provision of assistance to students in the computer facilities and dealing with the problems resulting from students' lack of computer skills are time-consuming activities which respondents say cannot be sustained in the long term.

6.6.2.2 Lack of facilities and resources

Respondents complained that the lack of facilities and resources - coupled with the need for more staff discussed in section 6.6.3.2 - was a very important impediment to shifting to a resource-based learning mode.

Staff complained that existing computer-laboratories are over-full and in poor condition. One respondent said that he had to change the structure of his course when the students numbers on the course were double what he expected, because the necessary computer facilities were simply not available. This respondent remarked that he therefore had to drop his teaching model, working with an integrated-technology classroom, and go back to traditional teaching methods where computers are used as a mere add-on.

A lack of audio-visual equipment and the limited access to e-mail facilities and the Internet were also said to be impediments to the implementation of resource-based learning.

6.6.2.3 Administration of technological resources

Some of the respondents highlighted the fact that it is difficult to obtain audio-visual equipment - and staff to provide support for the use of that equipment - after 16:00. This impacted negatively on the use these resources for part time students and evening classes.

Another example of administrative difficulties is that of a staff member who is planning to run a two week multimedia programme for an undergraduate class next year. As students numbers on the course are fairly high, he wanted to reserve the time in the computer laboratories well in advance, but had to face the problem that reservations for the laboratories for 1998 can only be made in the new year. This makes it difficult for him to plan for the course, as he is not sure that by the time bookings open he would still be able to secure enough space in the laboratories to accommodate all of his students in that two-week period. Also, it may affect the planning of staff from other departments who may not know that the computers will be unavailable for that period of time.

6.6.3 *Administration*

As with the provision of distance education, RBL practitioners in general agreed that the use of designed learning materials added a lot of new administrative responsibilities to their workload. The dissemination of materials, booking of computer laboratories and meetings with tutors are but some of the examples cited.

One respondent, however, remarked that whereas an RBL approach does add to administrative responsibilities, the use of designed learning materials to a certain extent makes administration easier as it gives students some knowledge and information without them having to come to the department and knocking on doors

6.6.4 *Copyright legislation*

By far the most of the respondents making use of print-based materials expressed a concern about the use of materials without getting copyright permission. It seems as if both uncertainty about the process of obtaining permission and the costs involved once permission is obtained plays a role in the fact that they did not attempt to obtain permission for the materials they used. One respondent, who cited cutting down costs for students as an important motivation for introducing RBL, said that to produce a single reader (currently sold to students for under R20-00) would cost R100-00 after proper copyright permission is obtained.

6.7 Institutional support required for supporting resource-based learning at the University of the Western Cape

Respondents identified five areas in which they believe the university can play a key role to support resource-based learning initiatives. These areas are:

- Making a commitment to resource-based learning on an institutional level;
- Providing for professional development needs;
- Making alternative resourcing arrangements;
- Providing administrative support for resource-based learning;
- Devising appropriate staff appraisal mechanisms.

6.7.1 *Making a commitment to resource-based learning on an institutional level*

The need for the University of the Western Cape to make a formal policy decision on the provision of resource-based learning is for many respondents an essential step in clarifying the confusion they believe currently exists. Interviewees said that an endorsement of resource-based learning on a policy level would provide a firm basis for developing new policies on staff promotion and funding for materials design and development, which will in turn impact positively on RBL provision.

Concern was expressed by some staff that there seems to be a tendency at the university for policy decisions not to be reflected in resource allocations and that this issue needs to be addressed if resource-based learning is to be provided on a large scale at UWC. The following serves to illustrate this point:

I still maintain that we need a Senate "Teaching and Learning Committee" similar to the Research Committee. Somehow UWC assumes that teaching innovations require no resources whereas subject-specific research does. Such a committee could receive proposals and fund them in a similar manner to research projects.

6.7.2 *Providing for professional development needs*

Respondents demonstrated a great need for professional development activities in the field of resource-based learning.

It was suggested by the majority of the interviewees that they would like to be kept informed of other resource-based learning initiatives on campus. A respondent indicated that a central depository for innovative courses will be very useful, and should not only provide information on **RBL** activities but could also contain some indication of the success of the course delivery and different strategies employed.

The following are but a few of the reactions to a question on ways in which the university can support resource-based learning that specifically relate to the field of professional development:

Quarterly workshops should be held with those whose task it is to design and develop these materials; the objective is to:

- *clarify the purpose for design a particular project;*
- *annual seminars need to be held where the designers present their materials & resources to everyone else; in these seminars they will have to present the criticisms of those with whom the materials were used.*

Forum for discussion. AD seminar series perhaps!

The university should also offer (more) workshops and assistance to facilitate the development of such materials.

FAOC's should play a more central role.; workshops can be presented to guide staff/departments

Respondents also identified some topics for workshops. These are:

- The use of modern technology;
- Materials development;
- Copyright legislation.

6.7.3 *Making alternative resourcing arrangements*

Respondents emphasised that providing courses making use of designed learning materials and resources makes huge demands on staff time and departmental resources. To continue to support these kinds of developments they believe a re-deployment of resources at the university to be

essential if resource-based learning is to be adopted as a teaching strategy. Respondents once again emphasised the problem that the university's strategic planning seems to be isolated from the budget and resource-allocation processes.

Three areas in which respondents believe a re-deployment of resources to be essential are:

- Funding;
- Human resources;
- Technological resources .

6.7.3.1 Funding

Staff identified the following activities as those for which earmarked funding must be made available:

- materials development;
- materials production;
- technological development.

The following extracts from the questionnaires give an indication of the respondents' reaction to issues of funding:

Development of materials are labour intensive and have a high initial cost. Providing support (financial and otherwise) for initiatives will go a pretty far way in motivating (and rewarding) staff to develop "relevant" materials

Require support to develop CO Rom type materials and/or computer-based materials.

6.7.3.2 Human Resources

Resource-based learning increases the administrative burden on departments . In general, departments have difficulty in providing that service within the existing infrastructure. Respondents stated that if the university could provide additional administrative support, it would go a long way in supporting the implementation of RBL. This support does not necessarily need to be provided to departments themselves. Respondents suggested that additional staff be employed to provide

assistance to students in the computer laboratories and to make it possible to extend the hours during which these laboratories are operational.

Respondents also made a strong plea for staff-relieve time for materials development:

Provide lecturers with enough time off to adequately prepare such materials; and time to investigate effective resources that can be integrated into a course

Provide support funding which could also include lecture-relief time to do the development

6.7.3.3 Technological resources

Staff emphasised the immense need for technological resources. The following responses illustrate this:

The installation of computer video projecting equipment should be a priority for the university

The AN department is grossly inadequate and the computer resources for students in the arts faculty virtually non-existent. The turnover of the printing department needs to be dramatically improved as well

Priority for budget that all residences should have access to word-processing e-mail, Internet, A. S.A.P. Video-conferencing for post graduate classes.

Make the technology available! In our department not even the lecturers have access to the Internet - or properly functioning computers for that matter!

6.7.4 Providing administrative support for resource-based learning

Respondents suggested that the university could put administrative systems in place that would support resource-based learning. The suggestions they made include the following:

- That a central reservation office for booking computer laboratory space be established - although the management of the laboratories could still be done locally;
- That the university provides administrative support for conducting student evaluation on courses - this could include assistance with developing and analysing of questionnaires;
- That a catalogue of the different kinds of resources available for resource-based learning be developed and that this catalogues be made available to staff.

6.7.5 *Devising appropriate staff appraisal mechanisms*

As in the case of distance education, staff involved in resource-based learning initiatives feel that their efforts are marginalised and not given appropriate recognition. Also, in some cases staff time spent on materials development and supporting RBL courses is not taken into account when an individual's teaching load is decided. A respondent said that it is currently believed that an academic staff member's duties are to do research and to teach, and that time spent on materials development is not factored in. In this context, staff in general responded very positively to the idea of teaching portfolios that is currently under discussion.

Respondents said that there are currently no incentives for staff to embark on resource-based learning other than a desire to provide good, effective courses. A respondent interviewed said that the underlying motivation for him to introduce the use of resources and designed learning materials is that by embarking on RBL "you are doing more than just hoping that learners are learning, you are actually doing something".

The need for staff appraisal mechanisms to reflect the university's emphasis on good teaching practice came through as a very important issue in which the university can support further RBL initiatives.

Some of the reactions of respondents on the issue of staff appraisal mechanisms are the following:

OLM [designed learning materials] should be included in Teaching Portfolios that evaluated annually. Outstanding work should be given recognition

Recognise materials development as an integral part of the academic enterprise. Also fund this process. if required

Recognise materials development activities when staff are considered for promotion

Actually, I do not feel that UWC supports teaching innovations. My view is that becoming involved in such activities is tantamount to academic suicide. The increased workload in developing and running such courses is not taken into account in deciding individual workloads.

6.8 The impact of regional and national initiatives and support for resource-based learning on RBL activities at the University of the Western Cape

6.8.1 *Regional support and collaboration*

All staff interviewed welcomed the idea of greater collaboration with institutions on a national and regional level. The kind of activities include the following:

- Lecture exchanges
- Sharing of materials
- Sharing of resources, such as computer equipment, laboratory facilities, etc.

Factors they believe to impact negatively on collaboration, especially in the region, are the following:

- The three universities in the Western Cape are in competition in terms of attracting students;
- The fact that the issue of rationalisation at the three universities to address the problem of duplication - specifically of departments and faculties - has not been resolved yet;
- There is an uneven distribution of resources - also human resources - across the three institutions ;
- Materials need to be developed to suit the needs of the population: the student population at the three universities are not the same and therefore materials appropriate to students at one university may not be suitable for students at another.

Although all of the above factors are, to a greater or lesser extent, regarded as a stumbling block in the way of greater collaboration in the region, this does not mean that staff are not exploring different avenues for fostering greater collaboration. Three of the staff members interviewed are embarking on some kind of collaborative activity, be it the sharing of resources or forging of partnerships around the delivery of a specific course.

6.8.2 *National support and collaboration*

A number of the respondents indicated that they believe that the potential for collaboration on a national level is much greater than on a regional level. A respondent stated that there are other universities in South Africa with a similar background to that of UWC, facing the same kind of

problems as UWC and he believes that these institutions should work closer together in future. Activities could include cross-institutional course development and lecture exchanges.

6.8.3 *Support from government and the private sector*

Respondents were fairly cautious in commenting on the kind of support they would require from government and the private sector. Interviewees emphasised the need for national policy that supports resource-based learning, but stressed the fact that if the necessary resource allocations - do not follow from these policies, it would be impossible to sustain the development of RBL.

The notion of a network of centres of innovation, outlined in the White Paper on Higher Education number 3, was seen to be a positive development by most of the respondents, but the general feeling was that as these centres at the moment only exist on paper it is difficult to conceptualise the way these centres could impact on RBL activities at UWC.

Forging closer ties with industry, especially in terms of providing internships for students to expose them to the demands and technology of the workplace, was listed as a priority by two of the respondents interviewed and was also highlighted in the questionnaires.

6.9 Evaluating the merits of adopting resource-based learning as a teaching strategy at the University of the Western Cape

6.9.1 *Assessing the success of current resource-based learning initiatives*

Asked how they would assess the overall success of the delivery of the course making use of designed learning materials and resources on a four point scale. respondents overwhelmingly indicated that they believe resource-based learning strategies to be highly effective.

Figure 13 illustrates staff response to this question:

Assessment of the overall success of the delivery of courses making use of resources and designed learning materials

Error! Not a valid embedded object.¹

Figure 14

Although a significant number of the courses were only being piloted this year, and a formal evaluation exercise will only be undertaken by the end of the year. respondents indicated that initial results seem to be very positive. Staff commented in the following way on the gains of following a resource-based learning approach:

Students have demonstrated better critical higher-order thinking skills;

This is very difficult to answer. The course has been very successful but it is difficult to assess what specific role the designed learning materials has played. Many of the other courses already use designed learning materials, and although it is difficult to judge their success in isolation from other facts of the course, students clearly value a clearly set-out direction for their study although many of them find it difficult to find their way through the students handbook initially.

Departments that have made use of designed learning materials and resources indicated that it is of great importance that materials be updated and improved on an ongoing basis:

Not a once off activity but a process that involves continuous improvement

¹ Figure 14 could not be reconstructed as the original digital file from 1997 was no longer available.

6.9.2. *Learner responses to resource-based learning*

The majority of the respondents identified the problems that students initially had in finding their way through the materials. A respondent said that he experienced some resistance to this approach as students didn't like working with resources on their own as they felt it was unfair. Some students perceived the shift from a teacher-centred teaching strategy to that of a learner-centred model as a way in which lecturers try to reduce their workload and to escape teaching responsibilities.

Staff emphasised that they experienced problems when directly moving from the traditional model to an RBL approach and reported that they had to find strategies for the phasing-in of resource-based learning practices. A respondent remarked that lecturers need to make sure that learners have the necessary skills to engage with the materials. Staff found innovative ways of dealing with this problem, with one lecturer, for example, handing out notes to learners about the way in which he himself would have used the materials. Staff seem to be very careful to not be prescriptive about the way in which the materials should be used.

In terms of positive reaction to the new teaching strategy, staff reported that students felt lost when they first came into the course, and that the provision of course outlines and information seem to address this problem and make them feel more secure and confident:

The students indicated (by a questionnaire) that the supplementary notes and structure of the course was quite useful

Students feel secure having the resources available

A respondent warns, however, that an RBL approach cannot be adopted without the appropriate support mechanisms in place:

It seems that it does provide students with both a clear direction for the course and possibly greater interaction with the material. BUT it has to be accompanied by a course that provides clear instructions and a lot of personal back-up - even sometimes one-on-one consultation

6.9.3 *Impact of resource-based learning on staff approaches and development*

The introduction of resource-based learning had a positive impact on staff development and job satisfaction. A respondent summarised this saying that "offering courses through resource-based learning is much more demanding than normal face-to-face teaching, but is also more rewarding".

In general, staff believed that their involvement in the delivery of courses through RBL has impacted positively on their teaching practices. The following comments from questionnaires serve to illustrate this point:

It allows lecturers to think more closely about what they are doing, and the investment is well worth it.

This {RBL} is highly recommended because it will force academic staff to conduct serious research in their specific fields, and this will help to produce innovative and creative material. Students will, in turn, be stimulated by the innovative material and resources

Interviewees further indicated that in many cases a resource-based learning approach led to staff members of the department working together in a course team to develop the materials and to deliver the course. This approach fosters a better understanding of the different components of a course. One respondent said that, to a certain extent, the content of the course had to be 'negotiated' amongst the different staff members. Respondents identified the disadvantages of team approach to be the fact that you have to rely on individuals to do their parts which leads to inconsistencies in the materials and the fact that it is time-consuming to coordinate the development of the materials. Nevertheless, respondents in general believed a team approach to course development to be one of the most important gains of a resource-based learning approach.

On another level, respondents said that a resource-base learning approach serves as a training ground for young and new lecturers. It gives them confidence and helps them to get a grip on the course.

Staff involved in the delivery of courses remarked that it is important to realise that change is sometimes really uncomfortable and that the old way of doing things is just so much easier. Also, staff embarking on the use of designed learning materials and resources shouldn't expect the pay-offs to come immediately. Improving the course and the materials is an ongoing process.

6.9.4. Planning for new resource-based learning initiatives

Answering the question as to whether they are of the opinion that an RBL approach should be encouraged at the University of the Western Cape, 91% of the respondents indicated that they are.

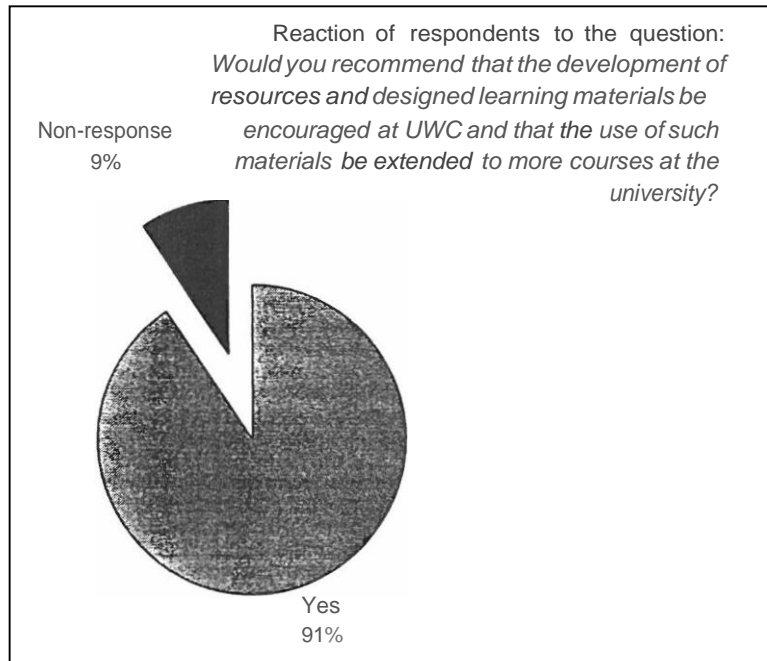


Figure 15

The overwhelming 'yes' to this question was not unconditional, which is illustrated by the following response:

Yes, if they are metacognitively based. Furthermore higher education should entail much more than just understanding a particular discipline - it must also entail giving students an ability to go beyond that, to see one's discipline in a wider context and be critically reflective about it. This is particularly important for science undergraduates. However, my answer would be 'indifference' if such development of materials had a purely technical function.

The most frequently cited motivations for encouraging the use of resources and designed learning materials at the University of the Western Cape can be summarised under three main themes:

- The potential of RBL to make provision for students from disparate backgrounds by catering for individual Learning styles and facilitating self-paced learning;
 - The fact that a resource-based learning approach, in which different media and different kinds of teaching strategies are employed, contributes to subjects being more interesting and exciting;
 - The fact that resource-based learning strategies provide learners with the opportunity to develop a wide range of skills.
- Some of these themes are further explored in extracts from the questionnaires:

Students should be more actively engaged in their learning. Their prior (school) experience has predispositioned them to a passive acceptance of information. First years, especially need to be inducted into new ways working, so that they learn to take responsibility for their own learning

Students enter the course with a wide range of abilities. Designed learning materials enhance the scope for self-paced learning. Such materials help students to assume responsibility for their own learning. They get practice in learning-how-to-learn

Our personal experience suggest benefit to faculty and students (learners) alike

We are achieving better results in this module

It is important for students to be exposed to unstructured knowledge (unlike the approach of the textbooks) and make their own sense of the subject - this is essential to break down rote learning habits

All avenues for increasing teaching and learning efficiency need to be explored and exploited

Other themes that emerged include the following:

- The fact that resource-based learning can make a contribution towards realising the university's mission as formulated in the mission statement with its emphasis on access with success;

- The potential of a resource-based learning approach to cater for part time students and to support an institutional move into distance education;
- The positive impact that a resource-based learning approach may have on staff development and thereby on the quality of teaching

This approach will improve distance education and resource-based learning practices on campus

VII Conclusion: summary of key issues and trends

7.1 Distance Education

Current provision

- The current provision of DE seems to be focused on courses offered at a post graduate level and non-mainstream certificate and diploma courses offered in regions where access to study opportunities is limited and where great need for courses is demonstrated.
- Enrolments on these courses are relatively small.

Planned distance education initiatives

- A significant number of departments currently not involved in DE provision are considering embarking on distance education.
- Not all courses planned to be offered through DE can be described as 'pure' distance education initiatives. Some of these courses can best be described as initiatives that combine distance education strategies with on-campus and off-campus RBL, community-based and community outreach programmes.
- Planned distance education initiatives are also focused on post graduate courses and non-credit carrying certificate and diploma courses targeted at niche markets.

Motivations for embarking on distance education provision

- The most important motivation for embarking on distance education provision seems to be the potential of distance education provision to open up access to the university.
- Other factors that influenced the decision to provide courses through distance education are:

=> to increase student numbers on the course;

- => to provide for post graduate training needs;
- => To provide in-service training opportunities.

The logistics of distance education

- Despite the logistical and administrative complexities of running DE courses, departments involved in DE provision were able to provide the administrative support to distance education students making use of the departmental infrastructure.
- There is general agreement amongst respondents that it will be difficult - if not impossible - to continue to provide this kind of support should either the number of students enrolled on DE courses or the number of courses offered through DE dramatically increase.

Institutional support for distance education

- Staff involved in distance education delivery raised concerns about the fact that DE courses are not regarded to be part of the core academic programme of the university and said that, as a result of this, they perceive both the status of these courses and the academic careers of staff involved in these courses to be in jeopardy.
- The University of the Western Cape could further support distance education provision by:
 - => Making a policy decision on the provision of distance education at the university;
 - => Providing in the professional development needs of staff involved in distance education;
 - => Developing appropriate staff appraisal systems that recognises materials development as an integral part of teaching;
 - => Restructuring the university administration and infrastructure to accommodate distance education activities.

An overall impression of distance education initiatives at the University of the Western Cape

- An overall impression of current distance education initiatives is that each of these courses can be described as well-researched, with solid course design and the different components of the course well-integrated.

- In terms of planned distance education initiatives, these clearly fall into two groups:

=> Planned distance education initiatives where the aims and goals of the course and / or courses are well-documented. Staff involved in the development of these courses have a clear idea of the target audience and are involved in processes to secure funds and to explore the possibilities of partnership agreements, etc. In some of the courses, materials development has already commenced and the date for implementation has been finalised.

=> Courses planned to be offered through distance education, but with planning not yet in an advanced stage or with the implications of a decision to embark on distance education not well thought through. In these courses, the motivations for and aims of offering this course through DE have not yet been clearly outlined and little attention has been paid to logistics and cost implications of offering distance education courses.

7.2 Resource-based learning

Current provision of resource-based learning

- Resource-based learning initiatives are wide-spread across the institution.
- The majority of courses offered through resource-based learning strategies are offered on an undergraduate level

Motivations for embarking on resource-based learning

- The most important motivation for embarking on resource-based learning is to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Barriers to the implementation of resource-base learning

- Barriers to implementing resource-based learning are mostly centred around the following themes:
 - problems with the production and dissemination of materials;
 - the lack of technological resources;
 - issues of administration;
 - copyright issues.
- Resource-based learning initiatives are mostly driven by individuals or departments with a view to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and receive little support from the institution in terms of resources and recognition.

Institutional support for resource-based learning

- Respondents believe that the university could support resource-based learning in the following areas:
 - Making a commitment to resource-based learning on an institutional level;
 - Providing for professional development needs;

Making alternative resourcing arrangements;
Providing administrative support for resource-based learning;
Devising appropriate staff appraisal mechanisms

Reflecting on the success of resource-based learning approaches

- Staff in general felt that following an RBL approach has impacted positively on their teaching practices and provided scope for staff development.
- Respondents reported that learners seem to benefit from RBL strategies.
- 94% of the respondents are of the opinion that resource-based learning initiatives should be encouraged at UWC.

An overall impression of resource-based learning initiatives at the University of the Western Cape

- It emerged from the survey that there is strong support for RBL at the University of the Western Cape.
- Current RBL initiatives vary widely in term of the way in which the use of resources and designed learning materials are integrated with the course design, with some examples courses that are well-researched with the designed learning materials and resources well-integrated into the course design and pedagogy, but also with some examples of courses where technologies are used as mere add-ons with little reflection on pedagogy.
- The scope of the study did not allow for the quality of the materials produced to be evaluated in any detail. On face value, the quality of the materials developed seems to range from very good to poor and a further study to further explore this issue should be undertaken.

VIII Appendices

Appendix A

List of departments that participated in the survey

1. Afrikaans & Nederlands
2. Anatomy
3. Anthropology & Sociology
4. Arabic Studies
5. Botany
6. Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE)
7. Chemistry
8. Christianity & Society
9. Community Dentistry
10. Computer Science
11. Didactics
12. English
13. French
14. Geography
15. History
16. Human Ecology & Dietetics: Division Human Ecology
17. Human Movement Studies
18. Linguistics
19. Management
20. Mathematics & Additional Mathematics
21. Music
22. Oral Medicine & Periodontology
23. Pharmaceutics
24. Pharmacology
25. Pharmacy Practice
26. Philosophy
27. Physics

28. Political Studies
29. Prosthetics
30. Psychology
31. Public Health Programme (PHP)
32. Social Law Project
33. South African Development Education and Policy Research Unit (SADEP)
34. Statistics
35. Zoology

Appendix B

Questionnaire:
*Survey of distance
education initiatives at the
University of the Western
Cape*



University of the Western Cape

Universiteit van Wes-Kaapland

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UNIBELL
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Telefoon: (021) 959-2911

Dept.

Dir. line/lyn*

Ref./Ver. vrys.

1 August 1997

To: Deans /HODs /Conveners of DEIRBL Courses Dear

Colleagues,

Please find enclosed two questionnaires on current practices in

- 1) **DISTANCE EDUCATION**
- 2) **RESOURCE-BASED LEARNING/ DESIGNED LEARNING MATERIALS.**

As you may be aware, Professor Cecil Abrahams is supporting an investigation into the feasibility of a Lifelong Learning Programme at UWC. As part of this investigation we are surveying distance education and resource-based learning practices on campus.

The Senate Academic Planning Committee (SAB), in line with the thinking emerging nationally through the White Paper on Higher Education, has prioritised

"flexible and effective learning and teaching strategies". As SAB states "All courses and programmes at UWC should be shaped by the use of effective and efficient open teaming and teaching strategies, and wherever appropriate the development of teaching and learning resources should augment contact teaching". (SAB July 1997)

This investigation is aiming to learn of the innovative delivery strategies that we believe are being developed in various parts of the campus in order to build on these experiences for the development of teaching and learning policies and practices at the university as a whole.

We estimate that the filling in of the questionnaire should not take more than 20 minutes of your time. Your cooperation will be very much appreciated and we urge you to return it to Professor **Shirley Walters at CACE** by the 18 AUG UST 1997. She can be contacted at ext 2798. Leave a message with Sonia Wanza if she is not available. We are receiving the assistance from the South African Institute of Distance Education (SAIDE) with this research and the researcher, Irma du Plessis, will be following up with you in the next two weeks.

With appreciation of your assistance,

Yours sincerely,

PP

Professor Colin Bundy
Convenor, Distance Education/Resource-based Learning Task Group

SURVEY OF DISTANCE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

QUESTIONNAIRE

For Office Use Only

qno□□□

SECTION 1

- 1. Department / Programme/ Centre _____
- 2. Faculty _____
- 3. Name of person completing the questionnaire _____

dep□□□

fac□□□

- 4. What is the total number of courses / modules currently offered by your Department / Centre / Programme through distance education mode?

Tick the appropriate box

1. None
2. One course
3. Two courses
4. Three courses
5. More than three courses

nde□□□

- 5. Is your Department / Centre / Programme considering to offer more / new courses / modules through distance education in the future?

Tick the appropriate box

1. Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. No	<input type="checkbox"/>

fde□□□

6. If you answered yes to the previous question, outline briefly what motivated you to consider offering courses / modules through distance education.

7. If you answered yes to Question 5, please give a brief description of the courses / modules you are considering to offer through distance education.

If your Department / Centre / Programme currently does not offer any courses / modules through distance education, you do not need to complete Section 2 of this questionnaire.

Please return this questionnaire to:

*Shirley Walters
Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CAGE)
UWC*

If your Department / Centre / Programme does offer a course (module) or courses (modules) through distance education, please complete Section 2 of this questionnaire.

Note that you have to complete a separate copy of Section 2 for each course / module that is offered through distance education mode.

SECTION 2

Note that you have to complete a separate copy of Section 2 for each course / module that is offered through distance education mode.

COURSE / MODULE DETAILS

8. Name of course / module offered through distance education: _____

9. What is the exit level of this course / module?

Tick the one appropriate box

1. Foundation course	
2. Undergraduate degree course	
3. Postgraduate degree course	
4. Certificate course	
5. Undergraduate diploma course	
6. Postgraduate diploma course	
Other (please specify)	

10. What motivated you to offer this course / module through distance education?

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Indicate the importance of each of the possible considerations given, and add any additional motivations, using the following scale:

- 1 = Not a consideration at all
- 2 = Not an important consideration
- 3 = Important consideration
- 4 = Very important consideration

Tick the appropriate box for each option

Possible considerations	1	2	3	4
1. To increase the number of enrolments on the course / module				
2. To make the course / module more accessible to learners in remote / rural areas				
3. To provide a more cost-effective method of teaching				
4. To improve the quality of teaching and learning				
5. To accommodate learners who are employed full time				
Other (Please specify):				

con1□□□

con2□□□

con3□□□

con4□□□

con5□□□

con6□□□

con7□□□

con8□□□

con9□□□

con10□□□

con11□□□

con12□□□

con13□□□

II ENROLMENTS

For Office-
Use Only

11. In what year was this course / module offered through distance education for the first time?

Tick the appropriate box

1. Before 1990	
2. Between 1990-1994	
3. 1995	
4. 1996	
5. 1997	

year□□□

12. Approximately how many students enrolled on this course / module in 1995, 1996 and 1997?

Tick the appropriate box for each year the course / module was offered

Year	> 100 less than 100	100-500	500-1000	< 1000 more than 1000	Not applicable: Course not offered in this year
1. 1995					
2. 1996					
3. 1997					

stno1□□□

stno2□□□

stno3□□□

III LEARNER PROFILE

For Office
Use Only

The questions in this section aim at establishing a broad profile of the learners on this course / module. It is therefore not necessary to give exact figures. In answering the following questions, please indicate estimated percentages using the following scale:

- < 5% = less than five percent
- <10% = less than ten percent
- <20% = less than twenty percent
- <40% = less than forty percent
- <60% = less than sixty percent
- <80% = less than eighty percent
- <100% = less than hundred percent

13. Where does **learning take place** for learners on this course / module? In other words, **where do learners stay whilst they are studying**, and not where learners come from originally.

Tick the appropriate box for each option

	>5%	>10%	>20%	>40%	>60%	>80%	>100%
Western Cape, less than 20 km from the University							
Western Cape, more than 20 km from the University							
Uncertain /unknown but in the Western Cape							
Northern Cape							
Eastern Cape							
Mpumalanga							
Gauteng							
Northern Province							
North West							
Free State							
KwaZulu Natal							
Uncertain /unknown but in South Africa							
Southern Africa (excluding South Africa)							
Other (Please specify)							

geo1□□□

geo2□□□

geo3□□□

geo4□□□

geo5□□□

geo6□□□

geo7□□□

geo8□□□

geo9□□□

geo10□□□

geo11□□□

geo12□□□

geo13□□□

geo14□□□

14. What is status of learners on this course / module?

Tick the appropriate boxes

	0%-20%	20%-40%	40%-60%	60%-80%	80% - 100%
School leavers					
Mature students studying full time					
Mature students working full time and studying part time					
Other (please specify)					

age1□□□

age2□□□

age3□□□

age4□□□

age5□□□

IV COURSE / MODULE STRUCTURE

15. Summarise in brief the structure and design of this course / module, making reference specifically to;

- the course materials that are used;
- the face-to-face teaching opportunities that exist; and
- the learner support provided.

Example:

Course X

Students receive four study manuals and one specially compiled reader. They are also provided with eight audio tapes. Learners have access to a tutor and he/she assists learners in forming informal study groups. Tutorials are organised for two hours every second week. The tutor can also be reached telephonically. Learners come to the campus for a series of face-to-face lectures three times a year for one week at a time.

During the course of the year, learners have to complete four assignments, which count as 25% of their final mark. Learners are also assessed on a portfolio, which they complete throughout the year. The mark for the portfolio and the assignments make up 50% of the final mark and a final exam written in November the remaining 50%. The expected number of student study time is 500 hours.

V COURSE MATERIALS

For Office
Use Only

16. What print-based materials are used in this course / module?

Tick appropriate boxes

Print-based materials	Yes	No
1. Study guide		
2. Specially compiled reader		
3. Textbook(s)		
Other (Please specify)		

Pnt1 □□□

pnt2□□□

pnt3□□□

pnt4□□□

pnt5 □□□

pnt6□□□

pnt7□□□

17. How is the use of PC / computer technologies integrated with the course / module?

Tick appropriate boxes

PC / Computer	Yes	No
1. Computer-aided instruction		
2. Computer assignments		
3. Computer assessment (tests)		
Other (please specify)		

pc1 □□□

pc2□□□

pc3□□□

pc4□□□

pc5□□□

18. What other computer technologies are used in the course / module?

Tick appropriate boxes

Computer technologies	Yes	No
1. Internet		
2. Electronic mail (e-mail)		
Other (please specify)		

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ct1□□□

ct2□□□

ct3□□□

ct4□□□

19. Indicate which of the following broadcast media technologies are integrated with the course / module

Tick appropriate boxes

Broadcast media	Yes	No
1. Television broadcasts		
2. Interactive television broadcasts		
3. Radio		
Other (please specify)		

bm1□□□

bm2□□□

bm3□□□

bm4□□□

bm5□□□

20. What other course materials and resources are used in the course / module?

Tick appropriate boxes

Other	Yes	No
1. Video tapes		
2. Audio tapes		
3. Telephone conferences		
Other (please specify)		

cm1□□□

cm2□□□

cm3□□□

cm4□□□

21. What types of face-to-face teaching forms part of the course / module?

Tick the appropriate boxes

Face-to-face teaching	Yes	No
1. Lectures		
2. Tutorials		
3. Practicals		
Other (please specify)		

For Office
Use Only

ftf1□□□

ftf2□□□

ftf3□□□

ftf4□□□

ftf5□□□

ftf6□□□

22. To what learner support mechanisms do learners have access?

Tick the appropriate boxes

Learner support mechanisms	Yes	No
1. Tutors (Department- or faculty -based)		
2. Mentors (Based at the workplace, providing in-service assistance)		
3. Study groups		
Other (please specify)		

lsm1□□□

lsm2□□□

lsm3□□□

lsm4□□□

lsm5□□□

lsm6□□□

VI COURSE COST AND FUNDING

For Office
Use Only

23. How was the development of this distance education course / module funded?

Tick appropriate boxes

Course cost and funding	Yes	No
1. Grant from funding agency covering staff time for course development.		
2. Grant from funding agency covering courseware production costs		
3. Externally-funded resources, such as technical assistance, consultants, etc.		
4. Normal university funding		
5. Special university funding		
Other (please specify)		

cos1□□□

cos2□□□

cos3□□□

cos4□□□

cos5□□□

cos6□□□

cos7□□□

cos8□□□

VII EVALUATIVE COMMENTS

24. How would you assess the overall success of the delivery of this module / course through distance education?

Tick the appropriate box

1. Very successful	
2. Fairly successful	
3. Not very successful	
4. Unsuccessful	

sde□□□

25. Are you of the opinion that distance education as a mode of delivery should be encouraged at the University of the Western Cape?

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Use Only

Yes	
No	

delyn□□□

Please motivate your answer in a few sentences

26. In your opinion, what mechanisms and strategies can the University of the Western Cape employ to further support the development of distance education courses / modules?

Describe in a few sentences.

If your Department / Centre / Programme currently offers only this one course / module through distance education, please return this questionnaire to:

Shirley Walters
Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CAGE)
UWC

If your Department / Centre / Programme does offer more than one course / module through distance education, please note that you have to complete a separate copy of Section 2 for each course / module that is offered through distance education mode.

SURVEY ON THE USE OF RESOURCES AND DESIGNED LEARNING MATERIALS IN
COURSES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Appendix C

Questionnaire:

*Survey on the use of
resources and designed
learning materials at the
University of the Western
Cape*



University of the Western Cape

Universiteit van Wes-Kaapland

Private Bag X17
Bellville 7535.
South Africa
Telegraph: UNIBELL
Telex: 526661

Telephone: (021) 959-2911

Privaatsak X17
Bellville, 7535
Suid-Afrika
Telegram: UNIBELL
Teleks: 526661
Telefoon: (021) 959-2911

Dir.line/lyn

Dept.

Ref./Verwys.*

1 August 1997

To : Deans /HODs /Conveners of DE/RBL Courses

Dear Colleagues,

Please find enclosed two questionnaires on current practices in

- 1) DISTANCE EDUCATION
- 2) RESOURCE-BASED LEARNING/ DESIGNED LEARNING MATERIALS.

As you may be aware, Professor Cecil Abrahams is supporting an investigation into the feasibility of a Lifelong Learning Programme at UWC. As part of this investigation we are surveying distance education and resource-based learning practices on campus.

The Senate Academic Planning Committee (SAB), in line with the thinking emerging nationally through the White Paper on Higher Education, has prioritised

"flexible and effective teaming and teaching strategies". As SAB states "All courses and programmes at UWC should be shaped by the use of effective and efficient open learning and teaching strategies, and wherever appropriate the development of teaching and learning resources should augment contact teaching". (SAB July 1997)

This investigation is aiming to learn of the innovative delivery strategies that we believe are being developed in various parts of the campus in order to build on these experiences for the development of teaching and learning policies and practices at the university as a whole.

We estimate that the filling in of the questionnaire should not take more than 20 minutes of your time. Your cooperation will be very much appreciated and we urge you to return it to Professor Shirley Walters at CACE by the 18 AUGUST 1997. She can be contacted at ext 2798. Leave a message with Sonia Wanza if she is not available. We are receiving the assistance from the South African Institute of Distance Education (SAIDE) with this research and the researcher, Irma du Plessis, will be following up with you in the next two weeks.

With appreciation of your assistance,

Yours sincerely,

PP Professor Colin Bundy

Convenor, Distance Education/Resource-based Learning Task Group

SURVEY ON THE USE OF RESOURCES AND DESIGNED LEARNING MATERIALS IN COURSES /MODULES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

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QUESTIONNAIRE

qno□□□

For the purpose of this questionnaire, please select the **one course or module** offered by your Department / Centre / Programme you believe to be the most innovative, and in which substantial use is made of resources and designed learning materials.

1. Department /Centre / Programme:

dep□□□

2. Faculty:

tac□□□

3. Name of person completing the questionnaire

4. Name of course /module:

COURSE /MODULE DETAILS

5. What is the exit level of this course / module?

Tick the one appropriate box

elc□□□

1. Foundation course	
2. Undergraduate degree course	
3. Postgraduate degree course	
4. Certificate course	
5. Undergraduate diploma course	
6. Postgraduate diploma course	
Other (please specify)	

8. How is PC /computer technology integrated with the course /module?

Tick appropriate boxes

PC/Computer	Yes	No
1. Computer-aided instruction		
2. Computer assignments		
3. Computer assessment (tests)		
Other (please specify)		

pc1□□□

pc2□□□

pc3□□□

pc4□□□

pc5□□□

9. What other computer technologies are integrated with the course / module ?

Tick appropriate boxes

Computer technologies	Yes	No
1. Internet		
2. Electronic mail		
Other (please specify)		

ct1□□□

ct2□□□

ct3□□□

ct4□□□

10. Indicate which of the following broadcast media technologies are integrated with the course / module?

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Tick appropriate boxes

Broadcast media	Yes	No
1. Television Broadcasts		
2. Interactive Television Broadcasts		
3. Radio		
Other (please specify)		

bm1□□□

bm2□□□

bm3□□□b

m4□□□

bm5□□□

11. What other course materials and resources are used in the course / module?

Tick appropriate boxes

Other	Yes	No
1. Video tapes		
2. Audio tapes		
3. Telephone conferences		
Other (please specify)		

cw1□□□

cw2□□□

cw3□□□

cw4□□□

cw5□□□

12. What types of face-to-face teaching forms part of the course / module?

Tick appropriate boxes

Face-to-face teaching	Yes	No
1. Lectures		
2. Tutorials		
3. Practicals		
Other (please specify)		

For Office
Use Only

ftf1□□□

ftf2□□□

ftf3□□□

ftf4□□□

Ftf5□□□

13. To what learner support mechanisms do learners on this course / module have access?

Tick appropriate boxes

Learner support mechanisms	Yes	No
1. Tutors (Department- or faculty-based)		
2. Mentors (Based at the workplace, providing in-service assistance)		
3. Study groups		
4. Telephonic assistance by tutor / mentor / lecturer		
Other (please specify)		

lsm1□□□

lsm2□□□

lsm3□□□

lsm4□□□

14. What motivated your Department /Centre /Programme to make extensive use of designed learning materials and resources in this course / module?

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Indicate the importance of each of the possible considerations given - and add any additional motivations - using the following scale:

- 1 = Not a consideration at all
- 2 = Not an important consideration
- 3 = Important consideration
- 4 = Very important consideration

Tick the appropriate box for each option

Possible considerations	1	2	3	4
1. To increase the number of enrolments on the course				
2. To address the problem of large classes and growing student numbers				
3. To provide a more cost-effective method of teaching				
4. To accommodate learners who are employed full time				
5. To improve the quality of teaching and learning				
6. To reduce the increased workload of lecturers by reducing the total number of contact (lecture) hours				
Other (Please specify)				

Con1□□□
 con2□□□
 con3□□□
 con4□□□
 con5□□□
 con6□□□
 con7□□□
 con8□□□
 con9□□□
 con10□□□

15. Is your Department / Centre / Programme considering introducing the use of designed learning materials and resources to some of the other courses / modules offered by your Department /Centre /Programme in the future?

Tick the appropriate box

1.Yes	
2.No	

frbl□□□

16. If you answered yes to the previous question, briefly outline your motivations for considering to increase the use of resources and designed learning materials in some of your other courses / modules.

17. If you answered yes to Question 15, please give a brief description of the courses / modules in which you might consider making substantial use of designed learning materials and resources.

IV ENROLMENTS

18. In what year was the course / module first offered in its current form, (e.g. in what year was the substantial use of designed learning materials and resources introduced for the first time)?

Tick the appropriate box

1. Before 1990
2. Between 1990-1994
3. 1995
4. 1996
5. 1997

year□□□

19. Approximately how many students enrolled on this course / module in 1995, 1996, and 1997?

Tick the appropriate box for each year the course was offered

Year	> 100 less than 100	100-500	500-1000	< 1000 more than 1000	Not applicable: Course not offered in this year
1.1995					
2.1996					
3.1997					

stno1□□□

stno2□□□

stno3□□□

V COURSE / MODULE COST AND FUNDING

For Office
Use Only

20. How was the development of this course / module (including the development of the learning materials) funded?

Tick appropriate boxes

1. Grant from funding agency covering staff time for course development
2. Grant from funding agency covering courseware production costs
3. Externally-funded resources, such as technical assistance, consultants, etc.
4. Normal university funding
5. Special university funding
Other (please specify)

cos1□□□

cos2□□□

cos3□□□

cos4□□□

cos5□□□

cos6□□□

cos7□□□

cos8□□□

VI EVALUATIVE COMMENTS

21. How would you assess the overall success of the delivery of this module / course making use of designed learning materials and resources?

Tick the appropriate box

1. Very successful	
2. Fairly successful	
3. Not very successful	
4. Unsuccessful	

srbl□□□



22. Would you recommend that the development of designed learning materials and resources be encouraged at UWC and that the use of such materials be extended to more courses at the university?

Yes	
No	

Please motivate your answer in a few sentences

23. In your opinion, what mechanisms and strategies can the University of the Western Cape employ to further support and encourage the use of designed learning materials and resources in courses / modules.

Describe briefly.

*Kindly return this questionnaire to: Shirley Walters
Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE)
UWC*