AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STAFF
DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES OF THE UNISA LIBRARY

BY

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SUBMISSION DATE:  09 DECEMBER 2005
DECLARATION

I declare that research for the topic:

“An investigation into the effectiveness of the staff development policies and programmes of the Unisa Library”

is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

....................................      ..........................
(Signature)        DATE
(Ms K M Ramalibana)
I would like, firstly, to thank God for making it possible for me to complete my studies. I would also like to say thank you to so many people who have shared their views and experience with me, and also helped, supported and influenced my thinking during my studies. I am grateful to quite a lot of people whom I have not mentioned by name who contributed to the success and completion of my studies, but special thanks are due to:

- Unisa Library staff for completing the questionnaire
- Divisional managers for the interviews
- The library management for allowing me to use the library as a research study
- All my supervisors especially Mrs Marlene Burger and Prof De Beer for their guidance, inspiration, assistance and advice throughout my studies
- Karen Breckon for editing my work
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- My daughter Karabo for her understanding, tolerance and love
- My cousin Kayode Akinyele for support, help and encouragement
- My family, especially my sisters Nana and Shirley, for praying for me and wishing me well
- My niece Esther Phoshoko for her love and support and always believing that I will make it
- My father for his prayers and encouragement
- My nephews, for their support
- My colleagues at Unisa especially Els Ten Krooden, and Monika Lor for reading through my work and for their input, and all my friends for their support and encouragement.
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late mother, Seriana Maledikwa, and my daughter, Karabo, who missed so much of me while this study was underway.
ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of staff training and development programmes and policies at the Unisa Library. The aim of the study was to establish how staff training and development needs were met and also how staff felt about the centralisation of the Human Resources Department. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed among the Unisa Library staff including the Unisa Branch Libraries. Interviews with four divisional managers were also conducted.

Staff development is an ongoing process that, by means of a systematic approach, serves to orient, train, and develop each member of the library staff to work together and to serve their customers with the skills necessary to deliver a quality service. As a result, training can be viewed as an essential vehicle to efficient and effective performance by staff and also as a process that develops the skills, awareness or expertise of staff. This is important for both professional and non-professional employees.

Chapter one of this dissertation provided the orientation of this study. Chapter two looked at how the study was conducted, including the research design and methods. Chapter three provided information on the legal aspects of training and development in the workplace and what employees need to be aware of and to know. Chapter four dealt with staff training and development and a literature survey. Chapter five gave an analysis and interpretation of the research findings. Chapter six described the situation at Unisa with respect to staff training and development, while in chapter seven recommendations were made based on the findings of this study.

It was found that the personal development of staff was hindered as only job-related training is supported by the Library’s STD workgroup. It is recommended that a training needs analysis be compiled in the Library based on the individual staff training requirements expressed during annual performance appraisals.

Fifty percent of the staff who were surveyed thought it was good to centralise the Human Resources Department.
**Key Terms**: Training and staff training, policies, staff development, programmes, job relatedness, continuing professional development and Unisa Library.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration ............................................................................................. ii  
Acknowledgement.................................................................................... iii  
Dedication .............................................................................................. iv  
Abstract ................................................................................................... v  
Key Terms ............................................................................................. vi  
Acronyms and abbreviations ................................................................. x  

## CHAPTER 1: STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

### PROBLEMATIC ISSUES

1.1 Introduction ................................................................................... 1  
1.1.1 Background to the Unisa Library and the staff profile .......... 1  
1.1.2 Limitations and delimitations ......................................................... 4  
1.2 Problem statement ....................................................................... 4  
1.3 Background to the problem .......................................................... 4  
1.4 Research questions .................................................................... 8  
1.5 Specific aims and research objectives ........................................... 9  
1.6 Value / significance of the study .................................................. 10  
1.7 Personal motivation .................................................................... 11  
1.8 Key terms ................................................................................. 12  
1.8.1 Training and Staff training ............................................................ 12  
1.8.2 Policies ......................................................................................... 13  
1.8.3 Programmes ................................................................................. 13  
1.8.4 Staff development ......................................................................... 14  
1.8.5 Job relatedness ............................................................................ 14  
1.8.6 Continuing professional development ....................................... 14  
1.9 Summary ................................................................................... 14  

## CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

2.1 Introduction ................................................................................... 15  
2.2 Data collection techniques ............................................................ 15  
2.2.1 Qualitative research ..................................................................... 16  
2.2.2 Quantitative research ................................................................. 19  
2.3 Review of literature ..................................................................... 21  
2.4 Interviews ..................................................................................... 22  
2.5 Survey research .......................................................................... 24  
2.6 Questionnaire as the research instrument ................................... 26  
2.7 Target population ........................................................................ 30  
2.8 Sampling ..................................................................................... 32  
2.9 Pre-testing of the instrument ......................................................... 34  
2.10 Summary .................................................................................. 34
# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABET</td>
<td>Adult Basic Education and Training</td>
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<td>CEPD</td>
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<td>IT</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>LIS</td>
<td>Library and Information Science <em>also</em> Library and Information Services</td>
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<td>LSTD</td>
<td>Library Staff Training and Development</td>
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<td>NSA</td>
<td>National Skills Authority</td>
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<td>National Qualifications Framework</td>
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<td>SASA</td>
<td>South African Society of Archivists</td>
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<td>SAQA</td>
<td>South African Qualifications Authority</td>
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<td>SGB</td>
<td>Standards Generating Bodies</td>
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<td>SETA</td>
<td>Sector Education and Training Authorities</td>
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<td>SPSS</td>
<td>Statistical Package for the Social Sciences</td>
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<td>STD</td>
<td>Staff Training and Development</td>
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<td>TQM</td>
<td>Total quality management</td>
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<td>Unisa</td>
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CHAPTER 1

STAFF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES: PROBLEMATIC ISSUES

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Institutions of higher learning like universities and colleges are labour intensive organisations and depend on people for the delivery of services. The quality of staff in these institutions is thus central to their effectiveness, in the same way that it is to all people-centred organisations. The quality of staff is dependent on the availability of effective ongoing staff development. Thus it is in the interest of any labour intensive organisation that attention is paid to the development of their staff to ensure effectiveness in their service delivery.

In order to understand the area of study, information will be provided about the background of the current challenges facing the effectiveness of staff development at Unisa. An overview of the University of South Africa’s (Unisa) Library staff, sections, and the skills that selected staff have, or are lacking, will be stated. This study will be limited to the Unisa Library. The research questions will also be stated. The aim and objectives of the study will be provided. The significance of the study to the academic libraries and to the profession of Library and Information Science will also be stated. An explanation of what motivated the researcher to conduct this study will be given.

1.1.1 Background to the Unisa Library and the staff profile

The Unisa Library, including its Branch Libraries, is one of the largest libraries in South Africa and consists of 213 staff members, and this sum includes professional and non-professional staff members, contract workers, and part-time staff. The Library and its seven fully-functional branches actively support the teaching, research and community service programmes of the University of South Africa. The Unisa Library consists of the
following divisions namely, Client Services (including the Branches), Document Delivery, Management Services and Technical Services.

The following is an overview of the number of staff members in each division and the work they do, the qualifications and skills they have, and what they need to perform their duties effectively.

**Client Services:** This division consists of the following sections: Subject Librarians, Archival & Special Collections, Audio-Visual Section, Main Information Desk, Study Services, Client Education and Branches. The Main Information Desk has a team of nine members, who answer queries from different clients, for example students, day visitors, staff and community members. They also do literature searches for undergraduate and postgraduate students. Their qualifications vary greatly because the staff consists of both professionals and non-professionals. Among the skills they have, are Internet searching skills, customer care, stock selection, subject database searches and archives and records management. Skills they need: how to make effective presentations, advanced Internet skills, customer service, including disability support, interviewing people and identifying user needs, and good managerial skills.

**Document Delivery:** This division consists of the following sections: Book Requests, Lending, Interlibrary Loans, Correspondence, Debtors, Periodicals, Photocopying, Shelving, and the Service Room. The Document Delivery Division mostly employs permanent staff and contract / relief workers at the circulation desk to accommodate after hours’ duties. The educational qualifications of the staff range from having a degree to grade nine. Among the skills they have: customer service and shelving skills. Skills they need include: telephone dynamics, English empowerment, the ability, capacity and patience to work with clients, some who know ‘too much’ and some who know ‘too little’ of the electronic information world and of the library as a whole, and good managerial skills.
**Management Services:** This division consists of the following sections: Information Technology Support Services (ITSS), IT Web, Finance, Management, Library System Support, Project, and Planning/Research. The ITSS section has three staff members with specialised skills in information technology. They deal with technical problems, offer IT support and deal with the installation of software and network connections, amongst many other responsibilities. Among the skills they have: designing and maintaining websites, systems support, project management, survey and research skills, financial skills. Skills they need: good managerial skills, graphic design skills, marketing skills, and delivery modes and legalities of electronic information access.

**Technical Services:** Technical Services provides technical processing - that is, acquiring, cataloguing, classifying, and binding material - for the Library collections and also tattle tapes materials for security purposes. There are fifty staff members in the Technical Services Division and they all possess a wide spectrum of qualifications, skills and knowledge to perform the various tasks. Staff who index and maintain information databases are part of this division. Among the skills they have: organisation of information including cataloguing and classification, ability to work as teams. Skills they need: automatic indexing, text digitisation and multimedia/hypermedia, and good managerial skills,

**The Branches:** As a distance education institution, the Library provides decentralised services at Parow (Cape Province), Durban, East London, Johannesburg, Polokwane, the Science Library in the Science Faculty on the Main Campus and at the Graduate School of Business Leadership (SBL) at Midrand. Among the skills they have: customer service, literature search and shelving skills. Skills they need include: they need to be equipped with all the skills that the Main Library staff have in order to help clients that come to them, such as Internet searching skills, interviewing people, identifying user needs, good managerial skills, subject database searching, and so on. Most of the ICT competencies require continuous updating because of the rapid rate of technological development. Refresher courses also are needed as retraining is always necessary due to changes and developments.
1.1.2 Limitations and delimitations

This study will focus on the University of South Africa’s Library personnel, which includes those employed at the seven branch libraries. It is beyond the scope of this study to determine and assess the effectiveness of staff development programmes and policies in academic libraries countrywide. This study started before the merger between Technikon SA, Unisa and Vista University’s Distance Education Campus (VUDEC) took place in January 2004, and therefore the staff of the new Unisa could not be included in the study.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study seeks to investigate the effectiveness of staff development policies and programmes at the Unisa Library, and the extent to which the staff’s training needs are actually met. The impact of the centralisation of the Library’s Human Resource function upon staff development will likewise be investigated.

1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Most, if not all organisations have an idea of what their mission is and sometimes they set down in writing their mission, what their vision for the future is, their short-term and long-term goals and their strategy to work towards achieving those goals. An indispensable resource in ensuring the materialisation of an organisation’s goals are its staff and how they are equipped to carry out their function.

Equipping staff adequately requires that they should be trained and a system put in place to ensure that their skills are constantly being monitored and when problems arise, they should be addressed to ensure that the staff’s ability to function competently and efficiently is not impaired. Attention also has to be paid to the personal development of the individual staff to ensure that they are developing in a way that will enhance their sense of fulfilment in themselves, which should enhance their ability to better perform their role in the realisation of the organisation’s goals.
It is important to note that all employees, regardless of level or function, have a responsibility to understand the structure and functioning of the organisation for which they work and employers must put systems in place to ensure that this information is provided to staff and that they are encouraged to buy into the mission, goals and objectives of the organisation. Staff should know what business the organisation is in. Today, employees, especially those in lower positions, lack a clear picture of the organisation as a whole. They are unaware of the organisation’s mission, its vision of the future, its short-term and long-term goals, as well as knowledge of the organisation’s products and services. “This knowledge enables employees to see the larger picture, have some idea of where to go with ideas, and seek help with problems” (Tobin 1997:44). Any disconnection in this area could create problems for staff development.

The Unisa Library has a written policy and other documents on staff development that describe what training and development is, who is responsible for training and development and defines significant concepts, for example, what is meant by “job relatedness” and so on. Staff are expected to read and understand the contents and meaning of the documents. It appears that there are some problems with the proper interpretation of these policy documents which affects the way the documents are understood by staff.

Training and development activities are always carried out by those charged with the responsibility for such activities and a busy programme can look impressive. It is necessary to question whether such activities are aimed at achieving particular objectives or whether they are driven by the perception that ‘any activity is a good thing’.

This brings the Researcher to the following important questions, which are influenced by the type of training and development activity. Firstly, is the training for job enrichment or is it for professional or personal development? Secondly, who is to decide which members of staff need training and development; and who decides what training and development a particular person requires? Thirdly, how many members of staff can be supported and for how many activities can a member be supported? Lastly, what criteria should be used to prioritise the needs and requests of members of staff?
There is a lack in the guidance and advice offered from management to staff to help them to identify their training needs, and to choose courses for personal and career development. As a result, several staff members are studying courses and degrees irrelevant to their work or which fail to advance their plan of career development. The question that comes to mind is do those staff members who take advantage of training opportunities for personal development intend to leave the institution, or do they assume that the Library will be able to fit them in after completion?

It has been pointed out that, “... there are still no acknowledged national career paths or national career structures for library and information assistants and other professions are beginning to offer more lucrative openings to this technical level of staff. Our traditional library and information assistant markets have already become pools in which other professions are beginning to fish” (Goulding 1996:38). When staff are feeling demotivated or frustrated they can be easily influenced or tempted to move to another career.

“A progressive career ladder is crucial to encourage valuable people to stay with the organisation and make a career out of library work. To ensure the continued health and growth of the organisation, employees must be retained and this can be achieved by, among other things, offering them recognition and career planning” (Goulding 1996:77).

The failure to develop staff, however, could mean that there are limited opportunities for promotions and rewards which motivate and retain successful and loyal workers. Upward mobility is part of the psychological exchange between employer and employee, and hard work and commitment lead to the attainment of successive levels in the organisational structure and recognition of personal career development.

Few organisations today, if any, can guarantee lifelong employment. A growing trend is to encourage employees to actively manage their own careers and to take responsibility for planning their careers, their own learning, and the application of that learning to their jobs.
To develop a career requires careful planning, strategy, and guidance and a knowledge of the broader direction of the service field in which one is employed.

Through performance appraisal interviews, and career or organisational planning sessions with one’s supervisor or manager, a staff member is able to gather information on the future plans of the organisation and to match them against their career aspirations and training needs.

Performance appraisals in the Unisa Library are conducted each year, but the benefits of these appraisals may be undermined if the expressed or even the observed needs are not followed up by supervisors and managers. If no follow up exists to ensure that needs are met and to ask questions if they are not, staff lose faith in the process.

Another concern is that, often, people obtain degrees or qualifications which make them more knowledgeable, and although they attend job-related workshops, seminars or formally structured learning activities they fail to apply what they have learned and been exposed to upon return to their workplace. This situation occurs when there is no clarity on the expected outcome of the training attended, and when no systems are in place within the organisation to give feedback or to ensure that the knowledge gained will be utilised. Training fellow colleagues and sharing what one has learned in a manner that will benefit the institution or the particular department is essential. Collegial feedback sessions on training courses and conferences attended are worthwhile, but it is even more important to put that knowledge to good use in the workplace. The training budget allocates the lion’s share of funds to job related training, but tends to overlook the provision of financial support for the personal development of staff which is also essential.

When a member of staff attends or completes a course that has little direct application to the day-to-day work of the organisation, the knowledge gained is not applied and tends to be lost. Tobin (1997:6) also points out that “unless employees can return to their jobs and immediately start applying the content of the training to make a noticeable and positive difference in solving business problems and meeting competitive
challenges head-on, then a training programme is indeed a luxury that few organisations can afford”. Employees who find their learning experience of value are anxious to apply their new knowledge and skills. If an organisation wants to stay competitive it must utilise the skills of its workers to the maximum to prevent wastage of time, money and resources. The harmonisation of the Library’s needs and of staff training needs should be the aim.

Another issue to be considered is that the centralisation of the Human Resource Department at Unisa resulted in the closure of the Human Resource Department dedicated to the library. Library staff members have problems that are unsolved and this can be traced to the absence of someone within the Library who understands the particular needs of Library staff and can resolve the issues that staff is facing.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is undertaken to:

· look briefly at ‘on the job training’. On the job training imparts the knowledge to perform effectively, teaches skills which translate knowledge into action, and provides the ability and the confidence needed to get the job done (Smathers 2003:1).
· find out what is actually meant by the term “job related”?
· find out how best the identified training needs of employees might be met?
· ascertain if information about staff training needs is drawn from performance appraisals or merely from the staff responses to training advertisements?
· discover if there is a training plan in place for each staff member to help in their career and work development?
· find out the current situation at the Unisa Library concerning its staff development policies, plans, programmes.
· determine whether the training budget from both government and the organisation is adequate?
· discover how the effectiveness of library-based training and staff development
might be defined and measured?

· discuss the situation both before and after the centralisation of the HR Department.
· to find out if management sees the difference, improvement or change after staff have undergone training and development?

1.5 SPECIFIC AIMS AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The effort to try and respond to the above questions will be done in view of the following aims and objectives:

· To identify who is responsible for meeting staff needs in connection with training, development and career advancement.
· To determine the effectiveness of training programmes in the Unisa Library.
· To make staff and relevant stakeholders, including the employer, aware of legal documents such as policies, legislation on training, development and education in South Africa and how they are applicable to Unisa.
· To point out needs in staff development at Unisa Library and to highlight the good work done so far.
· To find out if staff are practising what they have learned from training programmes, seminars, workshops and so on in their roles.
· To examine if there are any challenges resulting from the centralisation of the Human Resource Department.

1.6 VALUE / SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The Unisa Library will benefit from this research in the sense that it will learn if its training programmes have produced the expected outcomes and whether anything needs to be changed or improved. Through interviews, the researcher will investigate
staff needs and experiences. An analysis of staff needs will be done in such a way as to provide adequate data in three key areas: personal development, career development and library development in relation to the University’s mission, aims and objectives. Conclusions, recommendations and suggestions will help the Library to realise pitfalls and improve the track record of its staff development programmes.

The convenor of the Staff Training and Development (STD) Workgroup and its members, the programme and policy makers, will also benefit from the research in that they will have concrete information on the efficacy of their programmes in order to design better programmes and to evaluate the usefulness of comparative research findings in this area.

Other university libraries will probably benefit from the findings which they may be able to apply. The Library and Information Science profession as a whole will also benefit from access to the findings of this study, perhaps via local and international conferences or in published papers, and it is hoped that sharing this research may draw attention to problems previously hidden.

The research will emphasise the fact that training and development have become crucial issues to all library staff because of the nature and speed of changes affecting libraries nowadays. Different library technologies such as computers and telecommunications require constant upgrading. Library staff, in order to deal with this changing technological environment, need to keep their skills up to date as well. Automation of library procedures has brought with it the need for more on the job training of staff and for the upgrading of their skills. When new technology is introduced, staff need training to use it better. Library science education programmes at universities have to be reevaluated in the light of the new models of service that are emerging (McCabe & Person 1995:71). From the research undertaken it should be possible to identify staff training needs and programmes that address these needs better.

It is generally understood that there is a need for training, but, the question may be asked: How does the Library provide better customer services when staff are
overwhelmed by change? Those who manage or teach in training programmes are usually not aware of the varying success demonstrated by members of library staff as they learn new systems. It is, therefore, important for administrators to find the most effective ways to train staff because, now, more than ever before, it is just not possible for library staff to cope without being able to use a computer competently. The research will provide tools to measure the success of the staff training offered. A good staff training and development programme is necessary for staff retention and competitive recruitment (McCabe & Person 1995:72).

Staff are responsible for delivering services to users and this is one of the Library’s most important assets. The research will demonstrate how effective staff training programmes can contribute to the improvement of these services.

1.7 PERSONAL MOTIVATION

My father is a retired minister and I grew up in a family where we had visitors of all kinds from the townships and surrounding rural areas. Some came on their bicycles from as far away as 70km to ask for help and for counsel. As children, and sometimes, hosts of our father’s guests, we were taught to ask ourselves and to anticipate what each visitor might need, for example, “would this lady appreciate a cup of tea with bread, and might this other visitor, who had ridden a long way, not be very hungry and in need of a plate of food?” My parents set a wonderful example of caring for others and of sympathy, and they encouraged us to put ourselves in other people’s shoes and to help them whenever we could.

I believe this is where my caring ethic towards my colleagues originated, and I was further inspired by the Unisa Library staff as individuals, for they are so willing to learn. Many of the staff have diligently acquired knowledge and skills that they have never had the opportunity to use because they are not in the appropriate department; other staff members have skills that are not related to their current jobs and which are not utilised by their daily work; and many know that if they apply for training that is not job-related
their applications will have to be turned down in accordance with LSTD policy, and so the list goes on.

At one stage, I had the task of asking staff, throughout the Library, who were enrolled for studies, what their intentions were after they had completed their studies. This investigative project was run by the then Human Resources Department of the Library. Some staff members were sure of their goals, while others were uncertain if they would remain at Unisa, because they did not see any available opportunities. One response that particularly touched me was, “Unisa will see what to do with me.” This person passed his courses with distinctions.

In the course of this enquiry, I was made aware of the frustrations and the consequent unhappiness of the staff, and I became curious to find out more, to look for solutions and to do something about these problems. As a result, I arrived at the idea of researching the effectiveness of the staff training and development policies and programmes in the workplace in general, and in the Unisa Library in particular.

1.8 KEY TERMS

1.8.1 Training and Staff training

Training is essential for efficient and effective performance by staff. Staff training is the process of developing the skills, awareness or expertise of staff, and this is important for both professional and non-professional employees. Training may consist of induction into a system or routine, the organisation of new skills or attitudes, the development of existing skills in order to elevate efficiency, job satisfaction levels, commitment, interchangeability, co-operation, and to facilitate promotion. It is important, therefore, that training be prepared carefully, in response to staff and organisational needs, and that its effectiveness be monitored (Prytherch 2000 :733).

1.8.2 Policies
A policy is a type of plan that serves as a guide to thinking, discretionary action and decision making for managers, supervisors, and staff personnel. Policies provide common premises for action. Policies also help ensure coordination before action or decision making and provide some assurance that recurring problems and issues will be handled with some measure of consistency throughout the organisation (Tracey 2004:523).

1.8.3 Programmes

Programmes of study are designed to develop the knowledge and skills required for the provision and management of information in a complex, global information and communication environment.

These are three different kinds of programmes:

a) Programmes offered either at graduate or undergraduate level
b) Graduate research programmes at Master’s and Doctoral levels
c) Continuing professional development programmes or short courses.

Programmes can be delivered as seminars, workshops or conferences. They are tailored to the needs of information practitioners and focus on a broad range of current concerns from web design to the management and marketing of information services, and from copyright and regulation through Dublin Core and Metadata (Feather & Sturges 2003:297)

1.8.4 Staff development

“Staff development involves all activities, actions, processes, policies, programmes and procedures employed to facilitate and support staff so that their performance and potential may be enhanced and that they may serve their own and their institution’s needs” (Webb 1996:194).
Staff development is an ongoing process that, by means of a systematic approach, serves to orient, train, and develop, each member of the library staff to work together and to serve their customers with the skills necessary to the delivery of a quality service.

1.8.5 Job relatedness

This is an important concept that requires employers to demonstrate that an action, requirement, or programme is directly related to the job (Tracey 2004:369). There has to be a transfer of knowledge and skill to the workplace and the outcome of the training has to be tangible, work-related skills and knowledge.

1.8.6 Continuing professional development

“A continuing and deliberate organisation sponsored process aimed at assisting, encouraging, and enabling professionals and individuals to improve their knowledge, skills, abilities, competence in one’s practice and remaining open to new theories, techniques, and approaches” (Tracey 2004:540).

1.9 SUMMARY

This chapter has introduced the research problem and provided the background information to the problem statement, which included an overview of the Unisa Library’s staff, sections, and the skills that staff have or require. The chapter also included an explanation of how the study will be of value to academic libraries and to the library and information science profession at large. The research methods used to conduct this study will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will provide a brief explanation of how the literature review will be conducted and describe how the research and data gathering process will be conducted. It will include a description of the research methods to be used and the reasons why these chosen methods are appropriate to gather the information needed to answer the questions posed by the research problem. Finally, the population, sampling, and pre-testing are discussed.

The methods that will be used to conduct this study are quantitative and qualitative research methods. The researcher decided to combine the two methods in order to reach out to the Branch Libraries and also to have a verbal one-to-one contact with the relevant stakeholders. In that way one can get information from the majority of staff to draw up conclusions on whether the needs and expectations of staff concerning staff training and development policies and programmes are being met, and also to discover the staff’s feelings, and how staff were affected by the centralisation of the Human Resources Department.

2.2 DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The data collection techniques that have been chosen for this research are questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. These methods for gathering data are the most common in survey research. The research methods of the social sciences have long been a source of debate, and the search continues for methods that are more appropriate than those offered by the natural sciences. Quantitative methods were initially favoured, but a growing appreciation and recognition of qualitative methods has developed over the years (Morgan & Smircich 1980:491). According to Denscombe (2002:2) a good piece of research will depend on those who evaluate the work and the fact that the research should meet the particular expectations of those who read it. The
researcher should choose the methods that best investigate the problem so as to come up with precise and valid data.

This study is an investigation into the effectiveness of the staff development policies and programmes of the Unisa Library, and the extent to which they meet the training and development needs of staff, together with any impact that the centralisation of the Library’s Human Resource function may have had upon staff development and training over the last five years. In order to pursue the investigation it has been decided to make use of the qualitative and quantitative research methods.

There is much value in combining qualitative research and quantitative research. Denscombe (2002:105) indicate that “qualitative data as well as quantitative data benefits from corroborating information that can be checked out by other researchers; things like dates, times and numbers, records and evidence such as tape recordings.”

The researcher will conduct structured interviews with supervisors of various divisions in the library to gather information. The qualitative research method is discussed in the next section.

2.2.1 Qualitative research

Qualitative research refers to research involving detailed, verbal descriptions of characteristics, cases, and settings. It means fewer cases are investigated, but in more depth than in quantitative research (Rassel & O’Sullivan 1995:477). The researcher tries to attain rich, actual, deep and valid data from a rational standpoint. The tasks of the qualitative researcher are analysis and synthesis.

The following are some of the distinctive characteristics of qualitative research as stated by Key (1997:1-2) and Patton (2002:40-41):

**Characteristics of qualitative research**
1. Conditions: naturalistic inquiry - to study real world situations as they unfold naturally.
2. Purpose: understanding - seeks to understand people’s interpretations
3. Instrumentation: human - the human person is the primary collection instrument.
4. Reality: dynamic systems - assumes change as ongoing whether focus is on individual, an organisation or an entire culture.
5. Focus: holistic perspective - the whole phenomenon under study is understood as a complex system.
6. Data: subjective - data are perceptions of the people in the environment; interviews that capture direct quotations about people’s personal perspectives and experiences.
7. Voice, perspective and reflexivity - the qualitative analyst owns and is reflective about his/her own voice and perspective.
8. Orientation: discovery - theories and hypothesis are evolved from data as collected.
9. Sample: usually a small number of subjects and also non-random selection.
10. Context sensitivity - careful about, even dubious of the possibility of generalisation across time and space.
11. Results: valid - the focus is on design and procedures to gain “real” “rich” and “deep” data.

Literature review on qualitative research

Qualitative research has a history in the humanities because it strives to capture the human meanings of social life as it is lived, experienced and understood by the participants. Prior to this century, qualitative research received little attention. Today, the qualitative method is considered to be equal to the quantitative method and has been applied to other disciplines such as medicine and social psychology (Taylor 2000:163).

According to Taylor (2000:6), in qualitative research, data are usually expressed in
words. Denscombe (1998:174) and Leedy (1993:139) agree with Taylor that the feature which separates qualitative research from quantitative research is the focus on words rather than numbers as the unit of analysis.

Flick (2004:8) states that qualitative studies frequently begin with the analysis of individual cases, and then, as a second step, summarisation of cases from a general viewpoint. Taylor (2000:164) on the other hand contends that qualitative research begins with observation of the phenomenon and then data are recorded and classified. This means, detailed examination of phenomena prior to analysis.

Another distinguishing characteristic of qualitative research is that data are collected in their natural context and statements are analysed in the context of an extended answer or the total course of the interview (Flick 2004:8; Taylor 2000:90).

Data in qualitative research are collected and synthesised, by induction, to formulate theory, unlike in quantitative research, where the deductive method is used and theories are tested.

In qualitative research, researchers depend entirely on information provided by participants in analysing data. Therefore, a high level of communication and analytical skills are needed to accurately report the full essence of the experience, reflecting holistic and detailed views of participants (Leedy 1993:141; Taylor 2000:164).

Qualitative studies display the use of expressive language and the presence of voice in the text. Qualitative research might be considered a “warm” approach because it is concerned with human beings: interpersonal relationships, personal values, meanings, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings (Leedy 1993:142).

One realises therefore that the qualitative research approach is a creative, scientific process that necessitates a great deal of time and critical thinking, as well as emotional and intellectual energy. One must have a true desire to discover meaning, develop understanding and explain phenomena in the most thorough way possible.
Furthermore, qualitative research assumes the construction of reality in the subjective constructions of those under investigation. The researcher is the main instrument of both data collection and data interpretation, because of the personal interaction with the people and the position under study.

Emphasising the pertinence of subjectivity in qualitative research, Flick (2004:69) argues that ‘holding on to the subjective perspective offers the only sufficient guarantee that social reality is not replaced by a fictitious non-existent world constructed by some scientific observer’. Therefore, the qualitative researcher believes that it is important to understand the meaning that the persons attach to events in their environment (Leedy 1993:144).

2.2.2 Quantitative research

Quantitative research is research involving the use of structured questions where the response options have been predetermined and a large number of respondents are involved. What are the characteristics of quantitative research?

1. Data: objective - data are collected from questionnaires answered by respondents and the number of respondents who answered count.
2. Sample: Usually a large number of subjects that can be chosen randomly to represent a whole.
3. Reality: focus is concise and narrow
4. Measurable: measures what it assumes to be a static reality hoping to develop universal laws.
5. Reasoning is logistic and deductive.
7. The researcher is not part of the process the respondents fill in the questionnaire alone in their own time.
8. Basic element of analysis is numbers
9. The report is a statistical analysis.
10. Highly controlled setting as opposed to the natural setting in qualitative research.

The above are some of the characteristics as mentioned by Key (1997:2) and Patton (2002:40-41).

**Literature review of quantitative research:**

The main aim of quantitative research is to make valid and objective descriptions of phenomena (Taylor 2000:69). The researcher, tries to obtain objectivity by not allowing his/her personal bias to influence the analysis and interpretation of data.

Rassel and O'Sullivan describes quantitative research (1995:478) as “research in which values of variables are characterised by numbers or symbols.” In quantitative research many variables of a large number of cases are measured and data are summarised and analysed with statistical techniques. Quantitative research may be classified as descriptive, analytical or experimental. It is practically designed to test theory (Taylor 2000:164).

A quantitative method manipulates variables and controls natural phenomena. It constructs hypotheses and tests them against the hard facts of reality (Leedy 1996:144).

Usually quantitative data are collected under controlled conditions in order to rule out the possibility that variables other than the ones under investigation could account for the relationships among the variables.

The quantitative approach assumes that the world and the laws that govern it are stable and predictable, which makes it possible to apply scientific procedures to research into. According to Denscombe (1998:175) “one of the key features of quantitative research is the correctness with which research design are established at the outset of the study”.

Quantitative research relies, for its comparative statistical evaluation, on standardisation
in its data collection. This leads to a position where in a questionnaire the order of questions and the possible responses are strictly prescribed in advance, and the conditions under which the questions are answered should be held constant for all participants in the study (Flick 2004:9)

The quantitative approach is based on the assumption that reality exists out there and can be researched independently, and that the investigator has the ability to detach himself from the object of investigation to avoid bias. Leedy (1993:144) affirms that quantitative researchers try to understand the facts from the outsider’s perspective thereby maintaining a detached, objective view that, hypothetically, is free from all bias.

2.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature related to the research problem will reveal investigations similar to this, and show how collateral researchers handled these situations. By consulting sources of information like conference proceedings, newspapers, theses and dissertations, official documents, books, journals and the Internet one will be able to understand and investigate the research problem. The sources used are reflected in the Bibliography (92-98). The literature review on the legal context of staff development and training will be discussed in chapter 3, and the remainder of the relevant literature from the literature review is spread throughout the rest of the dissertation.

A literature review will be done to determine:

- what research has been carried out with regard to staff development in academic libraries
- whether staff development is considered essential by both top management and members of staff
- if there is awareness and enough knowledge about policies, visions, missions, goals, and laws which govern the employer’s duties to employees with regard to training and development
- the impact on staff and libraries brought about by the introduction of the Internet
and other IT technologies
who is responsible for staff training and development, career development, and
the staff development programmes.

2.4 INTERVIEWS

One way of collecting qualitative data is to conduct interviews. ‘An interview involves a
one-on-one verbal interaction between the researcher and a respondent’ (Melville &

Interviewing is no easy option and it therefore needs good planning, proper
preparation and sensitivity to the complex nature of the interaction taking place during the interview
itself (Denscombe 1998:110). Rather than asking respondents to read questionnaires
and enter their own answers, in an interview the researcher asks the questions
personally and records the respondents’ answers (Babbie 2001:258).

The research interview relationship, for all its scientific objective of “pure knowledge”, is
in all cases, claims Bourdieu (1996:18), a “social relation”. It is prone, by virtue of its
social structure, to distortion and the researcher has to “understand and master these
distortions”. The presuppositions and acts of construction that the investigator brings to
this relationship need to be known in order to arrive at a science which can lessen the
distortion effects of the survey process (Bourdieu 1996:18).

Bourdieu (1996:18-22, 25) draws attention to a number of distorting effects in the
interview relationship that the investigator needs to take into account:

· The investigator: the way the investigator presents herself and the survey, and
encouragements which are given or withheld, her view of the objective of the
enquiry; the rules, objectives and uses specified by the researcher; the position
of the investigator in the social hierarchy of capital, particularly intellectual,
linguistic and cultural capital; the level of language used; verbal and non-verbal
signs; the imposition effect when subjective answers to inattentive and even
inappropriate questions are treated as objective causes.

· The respondent: the respondents’ reasons for agreeing to take part in the exchange of information; his/her perceptions of the objective of the investigator’s enquiry; an awareness of what may and may not be said; the influence of self-censorship or other forms of censorship; fear of patronising class attitudes of the investigator; fear of being made into an object and sometimes very skilled resistance against objectivation.

The researcher used a structured interview for this study because she would have control over the format of the questions (wording) and answers. In a structured interview, each respondent is faced with the same questions. The other advantage of using this type of interview is that the researcher has a predetermined list of questions. Effective interviewing requires practice and careful preparation, therefore, structured questions will be asked in a sequential manner.

The use of personal or face-to-face interviews will be advantageous in this instance because most of the survey respondents are located within the same geographic area, namely Unisa.

Face-to-face interviews allow researchers to obtain large amounts of data, to probe issues deeply, and to ask more complex and sensitive questions. The researcher will prepare a set of questions for the interview which will be given to the respondents before-hand so that they have time to prepare and will have an idea of what will be asked.

It will be essential for this researcher to conduct interviews lasting 30 minutes to one hour with the Heads of Divisions in the Library. From the interviews, the researcher expects to find out more about policy, programmes, selection criteria for training attendance and development, feedback from staff and the effectiveness of programmes for staff development.

As an interviewer one can use visual clues to decide whether the respondent
understands a question and whether to continue probing the answers to open-ended questions. Face-to-face interviews can successfully last several hours, as compared to telephone interviews, where respondents become fatigued if they are kept on the line for too long.

As with questionnaires, a covering letter will accompany the documents sent to respondents. The purpose and usefulness of the study will be described, and the information the researcher wants from the respondents will be explained. Arranging for the interview with prospective interviewees, one can ask them to indicate several time slots when the interview can be scheduled. As soon as all replies are received, the date for the interview will be confirmed with each respondent. A telephone reminder a day before the interview will help both the interviewer and interviewee to keep the appointment (Leedy 1996:194-195).

According to Denscombe (1998:120) interviews can call on more permanent records of what was said, like field notes which were used by the researcher for this study. Sometimes an interviewee may decline to be tape-recorded, as was the case in this study, as it did not suit the needs of certain interviewees. With field notes it is possible that the interviewee can deny that certain things were said and argue that the researcher might have misinterpreted a point.

For this study, notes were taken during the interview and the very same day an email was sent out to the interviewee to verify the information. Replies that confirmed the accuracy of the information were received, with some constructive corrections. Email messages can also serve as evidence and act as permanent records for future reference.

2.5 SURVEY RESEARCH

Survey research approaches can be used to gather information on what people think about topics such as staff development, the centralisation of the Human Resource Department, training programmes or policies.
When one needs to gather data from a large group of people, one can conduct a survey: that is, one can study a sample of people randomly drawn from a population which interests one and ask the sample for the information one needs by means of questionnaires and/or interviews.

Judd & Kidder (1991:519) define survey research as “the research strategy where one collects data from all or part of a population to assess the relative incidence, distribution, and interrelations of naturally occurring variables.” Denscombe (1998:7) also states that the “survey approach is a research strategy, not a research method”.

Survey research is particularly suited to librarianship (Busha & Harter 1980:54), as it can successfully draw out the attitudes and opinions of librarians about their profession, status, practices, standards, and policies in a confidential manner. The survey research method can, furthermore, cover a large number of people regardless of their geographical location.

Survey research is appropriate for a study of this nature, where personal factors may be important and where contemporary data is needed, as it allows for an exploratory analysis of relationships. It is also one of the best methods for the collection of original data that describes a population too large to observe directly (Babbie 2001:238).

This method has the advantage of specificity, in the sense that the measurement of each variable is constructed from specific responses to specifically coded questionnaire items, which are then scored in a specific manner. The survey approach emphasizes the quest for details of tangible things that can be measured and recorded (Denscombe 1998:6).

Survey research also has general application, insofar as a sample survey, conducted for the purpose of understanding a large population, can offer information which can be extrapolated from the representative sample to the larger population. Survey research involves the collection and quantification of data, the data gathered becoming a
permanent source of information.

Survey work encompasses the idea of empirical research. It involves the idea of going out and purposefully seeking the necessary information. Researchers who use this strategy are able to use a whole range of methods within the strategy, like questionnaires, interviews, observations and documents.

Surveys include the use of the questionnaire as an instrument specifically designed to elicit information that will be useful for analysis. A self-administered questionnaire will be used as the instrument for data collection.

2.6 QUESTIONNAIRE AS THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The way to obtain relevant data for this study is to use the structured, self-administered questionnaire. Self-administered questionnaires are those which respondents are asked to complete themselves. The most common form of a self-administered questionnaire is the mail survey (Babbie 2001:253).

The researcher chose the questionnaire as the research instrument having considered the following issues:

· To gather data from a potentially large number of scattered respondents will need a questionnaire rather than arranging personal interviews for a sample of 100 staff members.
· Questionnaires have the advantage of being economical in the sense that they supply a considerable amount of data for a low cost in terms of materials, money and time (Denscombe 1998:105). The plan is that questionnaires will be sent out by internal mail to staff members in the Unisa Main Library and by courier service to the various branches. The internal mail envelopes will be used for sending and the very same envelopes will be used for returning the questionnaires via internal mail to eliminate the expense of such overheads as stamped addressed envelopes.
As far as time is concerned the questionnaires will be delivered within one or two working days in the Main Library, but within three days to the branches.

- Questionnaires are familiar to most people. Nearly everyone has had some experience of completing questionnaires. Therefore, it was decided to use this method for this study.
- Respondents will be assured of confidentiality and anonymity. This will increase the response rate and encourage frank answers.
- The questionnaire format makes it possible for respondents to freely express their opinions, views and ideas.

The disadvantages of using questionnaires as a research instrument include:

- A questionnaire does not allow respondents to qualify or describe ambiguous issues.
- It prevents personal contact with respondents, perhaps causing the investigator to gain insufficient knowledge about participants in a study.
- It may be difficult to obtain responses from a representative cross-section of the target population (Busha & Harter 1980:63).
- Pre-coded questions can be frustrating for respondents and thus discourage them from answering.
- Pre-coded questions can bias the findings towards the researcher, rather than the respondent’s way of seeing things (Denscombe 1998:90).

The above issues were considered by the researcher in the design of the questionnaire. Thus, a structured, unambiguous, short questionnaire was designed to obtain data. Both Leedy (1996:140) and Melville and Goddard (2001:48) state that a good questionnaire uses clear and understandable language, asks only relevant questions, is short, has objective questions and gives clear instructions. In other words the researcher has a professional responsibility to state the questions clearly so as to request only information that can be easily provided by respondents; carefully wording
all items in the questionnaire so that questions are conceptually valid and indicate a clear plan of action in mind and an idea of the costs and time involved (Busha & Harter 1980:64; Denscombe 1998:98).

In this research study, the questionnaires will be internally posted by the researcher with a request that the respondents mail the completed questionnaires to the researcher or the research department. Failure to return questionnaires will elicit a blanket email reminder to the prospective respondents. Another blanket email will acknowledge and thank all those who have completed the questionnaire. A third type of email would ask those who did not complete the survey, due possibly to being absent from work, to please complete the questionnaire.

The researcher will monitor the varying rates of return among respondents which will be used for the return rate graph. The day on which the questionnaires were delivered will be labelled day one on the graph, and every day thereafter the number of returned questionnaires will be logged on the graph. This activity will give the researcher guidance as to how the data collection is progressing.

An effective questionnaire entails writing questions that draw out required information. There are two major categories whereby questions can be classified on the basis of the method of response viz., unstructured and structured. In asking questions, the researcher may ask open-ended or closed-ended questions. Closed-ended questions or structured questions require the respondent to select an answer from a list provided by the researcher. They are very popular in survey research because they provide greater uniformity of response and are more easily processed (Babbie 2001:240).

Open-ended questions, or unstructured questions, are designed to allow free responses from participants rather than close-ended questions which are limited to specific alternatives (Busha & Harter 1980:70; Powell 1991:87).

Closed-ended questions tend to have more reliability than open-ended questions. This
is because there is a limited set of responses and thus less potential for variation from test to test. The advantage of closed-ended questions is that they can be standardised, simple to administer, and more easily understood by the respondents, according to Powell (1991:88).

Among the disadvantages of closed-ended questions are these are the limited set of possible replies for respondents, and the choices may fail to correspond exactly with the respondent’s position. This problem can be solved by adding “other” as an option.

Open-ended questions are useful for exploratory studies, such as when the issue is complex, or when the relevant dimensions are not known (Denscombe 1998:101). On the negative side, however, answers are usually more difficult to categorise and analyse than responses to structured questions. This can be due to the fact that they leave the researcher with data which are quite raw and require a lot of time to analyse before being used. For this study a limited number of open-ended questions will be used.

Within the closed-ended question category, as given by Burton et al (2000:337-338), there are questions which generate dichotomous response (yes or no; male or female), or which include quite complex lists of alternatives from which the respondent can select.

Therefore, closed-ended questions will be used in this research and will save time. However, to give respondents the freedom to express their opinions and perceptions, three open-ended questions will be asked.

In most cases, a cover letter should accompany the questionnaire. The main aim of this letter is to briefly explain the purpose of the study and to stress the importance of responding. The letter should be written in a friendly but professional style with a letterhead in order to indicate the authority to conduct the study.

In addition, a second cover letter from the Acting Executive Director (see letter in
Appendix 4, p.116) of the Library might help to increase the response rate. It will be essential to explain to some participants how the researcher selected them from the rest of the population.

The researcher should be respectful and thank respondents for their help, and should later share the research conclusions with them (Melville & Goddard 2001:48).

In view of the above, self-administered questionnaires were considered to be appropriate instruments for this study. Good questionnaires increase the relationship between the answers recorded and what the researcher is trying to measure. In spite of their disadvantages, well-constructed, self-administered questionnaires can save a lot of time for the researcher.

Rassel and O’Sullivan (1995:184) states that “questionnaires evaluate programs by gathering information on clients’ or employees’ perceptions of the programs and their value to them, and what outcomes employees experience.”

Questionnaires will be sent out to a large number of participants in the Library and therefore, the quantitative method was found to be suitable because it is associated with large-scale research and with specific focus (Denscombe 1998:175).

Having discussed the survey research questionnaires, the next section discusses the target population and sampling procedures in this study

2.7 TARGET POPULATION

Rassel & O’Sullivan (1995:34) states that “a population is any group that is the subject of research interest.”

The first target population for this study will be the staff of the Unisa Library, including both male and female, and both professional and non-professional, staff. There are about 220 staff members together with the staff at the Branch Libraries (Cape Town,
Durban, East London, Johannesburg, Polokwane, the Science Library on Main Campus and the School of Business Leadership Reference and Information Centre situated in Midrand). A careful selection of the target population, checked against a list of all the Unisa Library staff, will be made to ensure that the staff of the different branches and the various Library divisions are fully included, and status and gender issues have been given attention so as to avoid bias.

The second target population will be the Library’s Staff Training and Development Workgroup. This workgroup of 12 members consists of staff from the Main Library, and its function is to ensure that training is aligned with the workplace skills plan and the action plan of the University, with due consideration of Unisa’s Staff Training and Development policy.

The Library’s Staff Training and Development Workgroup acts in close collaboration with the Training and Development Specialist, who has also been targeted for an interview, and the Head of Human Resources Training and Development, whose main focus is staff development.

In order for the researcher to obtain accurate results, the population to be studied must be thoughtfully considered and care must be taken to ensure that the sampling strategy is consistent. Information from the managers of different divisions in the Library is important, as they conduct the performance appraisals of the staff, and these, in turn, reflect the developmental and training needs of staff members. These designated populations will be sufficient for the purposes of this study.

The target populations are geographically located close to each other which will save time, money, and correspondence, compared to a target group which is scattered at different locations. The target population can be contacted by e-mail and internal telephone which makes it easier to remind them if any delays are encountered.

After the general purpose and scope have been determined by the researcher, the type
and size of a sample must be decided.

2.8 SAMPLING

It is often not practical or possible to study an entire population, so it is necessary to make general findings based on a study of a subset of that population. A subset of a population is known as a sample (Melville & Goddard 2001:34).

Sampling is an empirical survey research method that depends upon a sample which is assumed to represent a population accurately. Therefore, the techniques by which the sample is chosen are vital to the validity of the research findings.

There are two kinds of sampling techniques: probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling occurs when people constituting a sample are chosen because the researcher has some notion of the probability that they will be a representative cross-section of the whole population being studied. On the other hand non-probability sampling is conducted without such knowledge about the sample being representative of the overall population.

The probability sample may consist of random, systematic, stratified, quota, cluster, or multi-stage sampling. For the purpose of this study we will use stratified sampling.

Denscombe (1998:12) defines a stratified sample as “one in which every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected in relation to their proportion within the total population”. Stratified sampling is something of a mixture of random selection and selecting on the basis of specific purpose where the researcher wants to understand the differences between key demographic subgroups within the population. The researcher might be interested in understanding the different views of employees and managers, male and female.

Consulting the list of all Unisa Library staff, including those at the Branches, will allow
the researcher to cover all areas of interest (education, race, status, age, gender) when making the selection of a sample.

Stratified random sampling is appropriate for this research because the Unisa Library is a department, within which there are four divisions (Client Services (including Branches) Technical Services, Document Delivery and Library Management Services) and within which there are different sub-divisions. The Library Management Services division, for example, consists of different sub-divisions: management (director and secretary), and the following teams: finance, web, information technology support, planning and research, system support and projects.

It is not good enough to assume that findings for the sample will be replicated in the rest of the population. The sample needs to be carefully selected.

The significant advantage of stratified sampling over pure random sampling is that the researcher can maintain some control over the selection of the sample in order to guarantee that crucial people are covered, and in the proportion that they exist in the wider population (Denscombe 1998:13). Sample size depends largely on the degree to which the sample population approximates the qualities and characteristics of the general population (Leedy 1980:209).

Given the fact that there are about 220 staff in the Unisa Library, it may be time-consuming and expensive to survey the whole population. Therefore a sample of 100 staff members from the different divisions will serve to represent the larger population. Four divisional managers were interviewed.

The different views and feelings of all staff are crucial in this study, therefore careful selection of both male and female, professionals and non-professionals, supervisors and employees will be made so as to cover everybody.

Data collection can be done in different ways. Within the social sciences there are
broad divisions between positivistic (quantitative) approaches and interpretivist approaches, that is, different beliefs about the nature of social reality (ontology) and competing visions about the ways that humans create their knowledge about the social world in which they live (epistemology).

Before engaging in the actual research methods chosen by the researcher, pre-testing should be done as a helping tool to avoid mistakes, embarrassment and disappointment.

2.9 PRE-TESTING OF THE INSTRUMENT

Pre-testing is part of the preparation for the actual interview or questionnaire and is therefore an important step to undertake in order to eliminate and avoid mistakes of which the researcher may not be aware.

In this phase, the researcher will administer the instruments and check that there are no errors, such as unclear terms, ambiguity, poor wording, and so on. The surest protection against such errors is to pre-test the questionnaire in full or in part. The researcher will give the questionnaire to 20 colleagues in the Library and also interview 2 colleagues. It is not usually important that the pre-test subjects comprise a representative sample, although the researcher should use people to whom the questionnaire is relevant (Babbie 2001:250).

It is better to ask respondents to complete the questionnaire rather than to ask them to read through it looking for errors. Most of the time, a question that seems to make sense on the first reading, may prove to be difficult to answer in practice.

2.10 SUMMARY

This chapter has highlighted the literature review and various research methods and the ideas of various authors on how data can be gathered. It also showed how the researcher decided to collect data using methods like survey research, self-
administered questionnaires, structured interviews, qualitative and quantitative approaches. The survey research method and the self-administered questionnaire were used to obtain data from Library staff. Structured interviews were carried out with managers. It is not always possible to collect data from everyone in the Library, therefore a carefully selected sample can represent a population. In this study a stratified sample was used. The type of research and its advantages and disadvantages were also discussed, as are the target populations for the study. The pre-test will be conducted with a small sample of colleagues for this research.

The next chapter will discuss the legal documents like acts and policies that govern both the employer and employee with regard to training and development and the issue of the interpretation of these documents.
CHAPTER 3
THE LEGAL CONTEXT OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights some eye-opening information for policy makers, employees, employers and those who are responsible for staff training and development, and it will assure providers of staff training and development, at all levels, of the importance of the appropriateness and effectiveness of what they are doing insofar as their legal responsibilities are concerned.

This chapter provides a literature review on the legal context of training, education and development.

It is trite to say that employers and employees must be aware and informed about the laws, acts, regulations and policies related to training and development in the South African Library and Information Science (LIS) sector, so that they know and understand their rights and responsibilities, and the opportunities that are available to them. Ongoing exposure of all the stakeholders to this type of information is vital, as there are regular amendments and new developments with which they need to stay up to date.

A good deal depends on whether Unisa’s policy makers and the Employment Equity Department incorporate the relevant laws and regulations into policy and practice, and keep in line with South Africa’s education, training and development goals, all of which are aimed at creating an excellent workforce not only for today, but for the future. This chapter will also discuss the draft framework of Unisa Staff Training and Development Policy.

Global access and competition are increasing, so it is up to South Africa and its organisations in the different sectors to work together to produce staff that are internationally competitive and marketable. The South African employer does not operate in a vacuum, but is accountable to a set
of laws which govern the employer’s duties to employees with regard to training. The overall purpose of these laws is “to facilitate the development and improvement of the skills of the South African workforce” (Pretorius, Klinck & Ngwena 2001:1-10) and to uplift the employment and promotion prospects of previously disadvantaged employees by means of training and education (Pretorius, Klinck & Ngwena 2001:1-10).

A literature review and a selection of the relevant laws will be described and discussed below. It is perhaps best to start with the larger context, namely that of the national approach to education and training, and the setting of standards for education and training in general, as opposed to the context of the workplace only.

3.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

In order to function effectively as a professional, one must have continuing learning experiences to reinforce his or her formal education. As a result, continuing training and professional development, which are considered essential by organisations and government alike, are the objects of special initiatives that indicate the urgency of continuing training and development.

In South Africa, new government initiatives have been launched that raise the profile of training and development in the country. These initiatives comprise the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act 58 of 1995 in terms of which the National Qualifications Framework was outlined; the Skills Development Act, 97 of 1998; Skills Levies Act, 9 of 1999 and the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998.

The general aims of these initiatives are to:

- Increase the level of investment in education and training in the labour market and to improve return on that investment.
- Encourage and coordinate training activities in South Africa.
- Provide an institutional structure in which the training needs of employees in
To redress discrimination in education, training and development and ensure equal access to education and training for all South Africans.

Pretorius, Klinck and Ngwena (2001:8-142) caution that when employers develop training programmes, the Skills Development Act must be taken into account, and they describe the objective of the Act in the following way:

The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 seeks to develop the skills of the South African workforce and thereby, to increase the quality of working life for workers, improve productivity in the workforce, promote self-employment and the delivery of social services.

The Act further encourages employers to use the workplace as an active learning environment, provides opportunities for employees to acquire new skills and for new entrants to the labour market to gain work experience. The Act also seeks to improve the employment prospects of persons previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination and to redress those disadvantages through training and education. The Skills Development Act ensures the quality of education and training in South Africa. The Act includes a skill audit which is an investigation into an organisation to establish what training is most essential for each employee. This can be helpful in providing employees with the opportunity to focus on their abilities and identify areas where they might benefit from training and development.

The Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999 ensures that sufficient funds are allocated and available in organisations for developing the skills of the workforce. The Act introduces a compulsory levy that is equivalent to one per cent of the payroll of each organisation. All organisations that contribute towards the levy are entitled to receive a portion of their contributions back in the form of levy grants that carry out accredited training that meets the criteria linked to the sector skills plan. This is a programme that the employer develops for each employee which will enhance the skills and productivity of the entire organisation.
Libraries and information services (LIS) (see Acronyms p.x) should engage in some form of accredited training and development for their staff, otherwise they will stand to forfeit one per cent of their payroll and, with the diminishing budgets that are allocated to libraries, they cannot afford to lose these funds.

The SAQA Act 58 of 1995 governs “qualifications in the entire terrain of education and training in South Africa, with regard to both standards-setting and quality assurance” (Church & Church 2001: §15 and §17). SAQA ensures that standards and qualifications registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) are internationally comparable. Another function of the authority is to oversee the development of the NQF, by formulating and publishing policies and criteria for the registration of bodies responsible for establishing education and training standards and qualifications, and for the accreditation of bodies responsible for monitoring and auditing achievements in terms of such standards and qualifications. SAQA established the National Standards Bodies (NSBs) and Standards Generating Bodies (SGBs) according to Regulations published in 1998. The NSBs and SGBs are responsible for the generation and recommendation of unit standards and qualifications against which education, training and development outcomes, including continuing professional development, can be accredited.

In order to provide for the quality of the qualifications offered or the learning achieved by individuals, SAQA published the Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) regulations. “Quality”, in this context, refers to the level, scope and nature of the standards set by the NSBs, and the ETQAs must ensure that the standards set are met in practice (Coetzee 2000:7). Coetzee further remarks that the ETQAs will develop into a valuable force for good in the training industry by providing structure and by the removal of the unaccredited ‘fly by night’ types of training organisations that so easily exploit South African learners at present.

The NQF represents a national effort to integrate education and training into a unified
structure of recognised qualifications. In this way various providers will offer education and training towards the same unit standard and qualification. It is also realised that once learners are aware that there are clear learning pathways which provide access to, and mobility and progression within education, training and career paths, they are inclined to improve their skills and knowledge. As a result they increase their employment opportunities (Coetzee 2000:3).

The NQF presents a number of benefits for both the learner and the organisation:

· it enables learners to enter learning at the appropriate level;
· it allows learners learning opportunities in the workplace or at a formal educational institution;
· while workplace training focuses on organisation specific requirements, the NQF unit standards and qualification requirements capture the competencies required in the workplace at large (W&R SETA 2004).

The Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998 came into effect on the 9th August 1999, and is intended to redress the aggressively discriminatory employment practices of the Apartheid era, and it imposes significant responsibilities on the employer towards staff appointed in terms of this Act. Section 19 of the Act asks employers to analyse their “employment policies, practices and procedures and the working environment,” and then to draw up a profile of their employees for each category (Pretorius, Klinck & Ngwena 2002:10-12) in order to identify “employment barriers” and to discover “the extent of the under-representation of employees from designated groups” (Pretorius, Klinck & Ngwena 2002:10-14). This information then informs the development of an employment equity plan, which is intended to ensure steady progress towards an “equitable representation of suitably qualified people from designated groups” (Pretorius, Klinck & Ngwena 2002:10-14).

What is so interesting about this Act for the purposes of this research is the concept of the “employment barrier”. Employment barriers “cause designated group members, however hard they work or try to perform, not to achieve the same level of advancement
or not to be valued as much as others” (Pretorius, Klinck & Ngwena 2002:10-18). Policies and practices connected with training and development, including training methodologies and strategies (Pretorius, Klinck & Ngwena 2002:10-20), are listed as areas which may possibly pose an employment barrier. The following example is cited in Pretorius, Klinck and Ngwena (2000: 10-20):

Budget allocation may be an employment policy or practice that adversely affects members of designated groups in ways such as in evaluating requests for training grants, the allocation of resources for equipment or technical assistance and decisions relating to promotion.

If an employer identifies an employment barrier within, for example, the area of training and development, then, in terms of section 15(2)(a) of the Act, the employer must formulate an “affirmative action measure” to counter every employment barrier identified (Pretorius, Klinck & Ngwena 2002:10-32) and should bear in mind that the removal of a barrier does not necessarily redress the disadvantage (Pretorius, Klinck & Ngwena 2002:10-32).

Pretorius, Klinck and Ngwena point out that when employers seek to develop skills by means of training programmes, they must take care to eliminate direct or indirect forms of discrimination which may adversely affect the full and effective participation of employees in such programmes, particularly of employees from the groups designated by the Act. They list the following as some examples of the pitfalls to avoid:

- training eligibility criteria that are potentially discriminatory would include such criteria as seniority, type of work done, grade, earnings, “next-in-line status”;
- type of training offered, for example, to offer lower ranking employees (where many of the members of the designated groups are found) training in current job skills only, and to fail to offer training to enhance the employee’s prospects for promotion, while at the same time, to offer senior staff (who generally come from the more advantaged sections of the community) training opportunities that prepare them for promotion;
scheduling of training may be indirectly discriminatory if, for example, it is scheduled for weekends or evenings only, or only during the day (which can exclude staff who work night shifts), or conflicts with religious observance, or is of a duration that prevents the freedom of designated employees in certain types of work to attend training (2000: 8-141-8-142).

The Act highlights the need to place a greater emphasis on the continuing professional development of all staff to ensure that they are competent to do their jobs and to achieve equality and equity targets in the workplace. Equal opportunities and fair treatment of staff is the purpose of the Employment Equity Act, and to take heed of its guidance will surely result in a positive attitude and more productivity in organisations.

The importance of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995, which came into effect on the 11th November 1996, for training in the workplace is stated in somewhat negative terms. Schedule 8 to the Labour Relations Act, namely, the Code of Good Practice: Dismissal, protects the employee from dismissals which are procedurally unfair. Thus, when an employee is dismissed during the probation period for poor work performance, the fairness of the dismissal procedure will be assessed on “whether the employer gave the employee sufficient instruction, training, guidance, evaluation or counselling” (Botha, 2000: 201). The employer is guided to counsel and train probationers when necessary and according, at the very least, to the standard of help that an average employee would require (Botha 2000:201-202), and moreover, the employer must allow the probationer sufficient time to improve (Botha 2000:203). It is thus very clear that good work performance is a shared responsibility between the employee who must be, or become, able and the employer who must support and enable.

As this chapter is about bringing awareness, it is proper to highlight the importance of training as it has to happen before dismissal. Staff training and development are essential in that they enable an employee to perform better, and a staff member may not be dismissed on the grounds of not performing well if he/she was not given the chance to attend training or to be trained.
These Acts can be seen as enabling tools for both employers and workers, helping to open doors by removing discriminatory barriers of the past and encouraging continuing professional development and life-long learning of all employees. The legislation also provides access to development, training, and new opportunities. Organisations benefit from a more productive work force and better trained and motivated staff.

### 3.3 LEARNERSHIPS

As part of its objective to develop the skills of workers the Act implements the use of "learnerships" and learnership agreements between candidates for employment (or employed staff) and the employer and providers of training. This three way arrangement allows a learner to enrol for an accredited learnership which involves a structured learning component supplied by the training provider together with practical on-the-job experience supplied by the employer. The learnership leads to a qualification registered under the National Qualifications Framework, and provides the job seeker with the necessary skills and experience to enter the job market with a competitive advantage (Pretorius, Klinck & Ngwena 2002:8-142).

#### 3.3.1 National Skills Authority (NSA)

The NSA advises and reports to the Minister of Labour on the national skills development policy and strategy, on the guidelines for the implementation of the strategy and policy; on the allocation of subsidies from the National Skills Fund and on any regulations to be made; it liaises with the SETAs on the national skills development policy and strategy; conducts any investigations that may arise out of the application of the Act, and performs a number of other functions and duties (Coetzee 2000:12).

#### 3.3.2 Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs)

The Minister of Labour may establish a SETA for any national economic sector, and once established, a SETA must apply to SAQA “to be accredited as a body responsible for monitoring achievements in terms of standards and qualifications and must within 18
months of its application be so accredited” (Church & Church 2001: §45). Each SETA is expected to develop a “skills plan” within the national skills development strategy and to implement that plan by “establishing learnerships; approving workplace skills plans; allocating grants in the prescribed manner to employers, education and training providers and workers; and by monitoring education and training in the sector” (Church & Church 2001: §46). The SETA must liaise with the NSA on the national skills development policy and strategy and on its sector plan, and with the Department of Labour and the various education bodies to improve the communication of information about employment opportunities, and between the providers of education and training and the labour market (Church & Church 2001: §47). The SETA also collects and gives out the skills development levies in its sector, and reports to the Director-General of Labour on its income, expenditure and the implementation of the sector skills plan (Church & Church 2001: §46). It is interesting to note that *A List and Scope of Coverage of Sector Education and Training Authorities* was published in the *Government Gazette* of the 7 September 1999. Number 7 on this list is the sector that deals with “Education, Training and Development Practices” and the scope of coverage of this sector includes, but is not limited to:

- public and private education and training providers,
- research institutes and organisations,
- examination and assessment bodies,
- NGOs involved in education and training development,
- Trade Union employees,
- employees of political organisations (Coetzee 2000:15, 18).

The situation at present concerning SETAs in the Library profession as provided by Molepo (2004) the Convenor of Continuing Education and Professional Development (CEPD) is as follows: [the passage has been slightly edited] “The Library and Archives constituency belongs to the Education Training Development Practices Sector Education Training Authority (ETDP SETA). Other stakeholders in this sector are training institutions, the Department of Education at both the national and provincial levels, political parties, trade unions and employers, schools, higher education,
community based organizations, research institutions, ABET practitioners, and so on (2004).

Although libraries and archives were identified as separate fields where learnership would be established, that has not materialised as no unit standards, as yet, have been registered. The Standards Generating Body (SGB) has been struggling to meet and put together unit standards to submit to SAQA. There is nothing much done on archival standards according to the secretary of the Archives SGB Mr Rodriques (1995). More information on the archival field and the South African Society of Archivists (SASA) can be found on the SASA website http://www.archives.org.za. To date, nine standards have been submitted and are waiting to go through the SAQA process. Only when these unit standards are registered will the SETA be in a position to establish a learnership in the sector. The other problem is that a substantial number of libraries belong to mother organisations that fall under other SETAs, such as public libraries, provincial libraries, corporate libraries, and so on.

3.4 SUMMARY

It is important for employers and employees to be familiar with the legislation pertaining to education and training. These laws impose certain obligations on the employer to offer employees opportunities they might not otherwise have had, and employees and job seekers need to inform themselves of what they can expect from their organisations and what external assistance is available to them and to their employers. Responsible organisations and well-informed employees and job seekers can go a long way to developing a highly skilled South African workforce.
CHAPTER 4
STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we will look at staff development and the demands made on staff by the emergence of information technology. The importance of quality will also be discussed (skilled and dedicated staff are a guarantee of quality service) as it is needed to promote services in library and information services.

Staff development is essentially concerned with realising the potential of each staff member to be effective, successful, creative and to take bold initiatives in their work to the benefit of their clients, their colleagues, their institution and their own career development (Partington & Stainton 2003:1). This relates very well with the point that Brophy (2000:91) and Peters (1990:127) have repeatedly made, namely that the workforce in any organisation is its principal asset. Peters recommends that training become a corporate obsession.

4.2 THE IMPACT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) ON STAFF

Information technology has become an influential factor in nearly every aspect of our society. Understanding information technology, its components and language has also become a requirement for personal and professional growth and success.

According to Brophy (2000:95), library supervisors have opportunities to encourage staff to develop IT related skills from the perspective of a subject, user, technical or from a point of view of their administrative responsibilities. It is gradually happening in some libraries that certain members of staff have the knowledge to design and maintain websites. Not all staff will welcome these new skills, and some will lag behind for various reasons. Since it is no longer possible to allow any staff to ‘opt out’, some effort must be made to bring confidence and basic competence to all staff.
The following are some of the factors that have impacted on staff due to the introduction of IT:

· change in education, where subjects dealing with IT have to be introduced to the study of library science curriculum and also to the practice of the profession itself
· staff have to cope and keep up with rapid technological changes
· lack of staff training due to time constraints resulting in pressure from clients who demand service that requires or depends on IT literacy
· role changes, for example, subject librarians have to know how to search for information on the Internet and how to use different database software interfaces
· demands by clients for IT training which is not the Library’s core business but is essential to use its resources
· increased workload requiring staff to work smarter, taking advantage of advances in IT
· being pro-active and informing clients of advances in IT
· being knowledgeable of and able to provide facilities for the disabled, particularly the blind

One of the major factors that impacted on staff as a result of information technology are their role changes.

Staff today are assuming new roles in libraries, and so it is essential that they receive the training and support to acquire the necessary skills these new roles require. This does not mean that qualified information professionals have to go back to Library school to learn about all the latest developments in the electronic information environment. They should rather further their skills through good quality continuous education programmes, short courses or postgraduate work designed to help the professional to move from a the traditional intermediary approach, to one which also integrates information technologies for libraries and assists users to become more IT information independent (Raitt 1997:246).
Information professionals in a new role perform different tasks as compared to before the introduction of technologies. According to Raitt (1997:246-247) there are several areas in which they can develop new skills and strategies in order to change, survive and continue to compete in the world of electronic information viz.:

- Intellectual capital and knowledge management.
- Information ‘anxiety’ amongst corporate knowledge workers. The information professional can help workers overcome uncertainty about what they do not know.
- Information resources audit.
- Information professionals who design web pages (‘web authors’) and maintain them; and those who use databases and do searches.

These are some of the roles that are currently needed and are being practised. Special programmes may need to be established to deal with retraining.

4.3 THE ROLE OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Training can be seen as a formal, often short-term initiatives, where the organisation attempts to increase an individual’s skills and knowledge in order for them to perform a particular set of tasks with increased ability.

According to my view, there is a tendency amongst some staff to see training as something that operates outside of normal work activities. This perception is reinforced by the belief that training involves going on courses and the idea that it is a day off (or days off) from work, a close relative of annual leave or time off for “good behaviour”. It is also reinforced by the idea that training only happens after staff have been doing a job for some time.

Clearly some of these perceptions about training are accurate. It does, in part, involve going on courses and taking time off from work; it could involve staff who have been with an organisation for some time; it can centre on themes that are not directly related
to work activities and it can involve the need for a separate budget. Without a focus for these activities, or without some stated objective that training seeks to achieve, training will continue to be perceived as an option that staff, managers and organisations can take or leave.

In my experience; one possible way of providing a focus for training is to see it in terms of problem solving, for example, solving the problem of providing an efficient and effective service. On the one hand the Unisa staff have the need for efficient and effective service, and on the other hand, new staff who are at the start of their employment may know nothing of the service. Unisa Library also have existing staff who may require new skills if the service should change and adapt to technology. The gap between these two factors represents the problem for which training and development can provide the solution.

A systematic approach to training and development plays a central role in developing staff who provide a service. Thus, it is essential to plan.

Perhaps the overriding weakness in staff development programmes is a lack of clear objectives, for example, how will attendance at a particular workshop, or enrolment in a particular course, help the librarian or help the library?

One might argue that knowledge for the sake of knowledge is sufficient justification for the Library and the librarian’s investment in a training programme. But factors such as accountability, relevance and fit with both individual and organisational goals cannot be ignored.

A clearly identified focus for training and development enables a simple and concise set of objectives to be formulated. These should encompass all the needs of a training and development programme and be clearly achievable and easily monitored. Noon (1992: 67) for example, came up with the following objectives:
· to provide staff at all levels with skills and competencies to contribute to an effective library and information service;
· to identify and develop new skills and competencies to ensure that the Library and Information Service (LIS) (see Acronyms p.x) continues to provide a high quality service;
· to provide staff with the opportunity for personal and professional development for the benefit of themselves and the service;
· to monitor the training and development programme to ensure that it meets the needs of the service and its staff.

The primary objective of a staff development programme is to facilitate change by challenging the staff and contributing to a continuous learning process. To achieve the above-mentioned objectives there are some basic components of the staff development programme plan that must be in place. A well thought out staff development programme is essential for every academic library. The programme will be driven by a number of considerations such as staff orientation or induction, on the job training, job skills and personal development, information technology and annual training and development review.

4.4 STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

4.4.1 Staff orientation /induction

Orientation provides a staff member, existing or new, with an overview of the university and library culture that assures an understanding of policies and procedures necessary to function efficiently in the environment. The induction programme consists of important information about the library, the work environment, colleagues, how the work of each division leads to the big picture. This should be done at the beginning of the job task training. The second part of the induction programme would include more mundane but useful information, like how staff are paid, rules and policies, and anything beyond that can be included in the training for the actual post.
Separating the two induction programmes makes it possible to ensure that, eventually, everyone starts from the same basic understanding of their workplace and its procedures, irrespective of their job. Orientation should be addressed at various levels namely: the departments, the library and the university. At the Unisa Library, induction is done by taking the new staff members on a library tour and also introducing them to colleagues so that they know where their colleagues’ offices are. An excellent Unisa campus tour which is also organised by the Department of Human Resources, is available to new, as well as existing, staff, who are interested and want to keep up to date.

4.4.2 On-the-job training

On-the-job training imparts the knowledge to perform the specific job effectively; teaches skills which translate knowledge into action, and provides the ability and the confidence needed to get the job done. In other words, showing new staff what their job actually entails. This is being practised by a lot of libraries including the Unisa Library.

On-the-job training is important to new staff members, and also to existing staff members when, for instance, new systems are introduced. Training should be comprehensive and commensurate with the position’s job description and objectives.

For each post there should be someone who can provide, or supervise the provision of a basic introduction to the tasks that a new job incumbent needs to be able to perform, and to ensure that within a reasonable time he/she becomes proficient and independent.

A checklist for each type of post, based on the job description of that post, should ensure that the tasks are comprehensively covered and would serve as a programme for trainer and trainee (Noon 1992:69).

Training operatives and some libraries like Unisa often rely on ‘on-the-job’ training from existing employees. This can be effective if the existing employees have the time to
devote to the training, are themselves competent workers and know how to impart the necessary skills and knowledge. Unfortunately these conditions are often not adhered to in practice.

4.4.3 The job skills and personal development programme

Job skills form part of the job description and one knows by looking at the list of staff training and development initiatives from the Human Resource Department, and also at the job requirements for a post, which skills are needed to perform a particular job. The job skills profile for a post form the basis of any skills training that the job incumbent undertakes.

Job descriptions are a good starting point when discussing training needs, and should result in an effective training programme. The process should also ensure that training is directly related to the provision of service to users.

The job skills part of a job description is based on the requirements of the service, but in addition there are needs that the staff themselves have for personal development and these should be considered. Noon (1992:69) also stated that although systematic and effective training ought to make work performance more enjoyable as well as more effective, staff still have their own aspirations to develop skills or talents beyond those identified for a particular job.

Professional and personal development is a big challenge to most libraries, including the Unisa Library. One might ask how academic libraries should provide opportunities for professional development with respect to competencies and abilities which are not task oriented or work related. How can librarians be helped to become “assertive risk-takers, web page creators, trainers, negotiators, synthesizers and so on,” who are able to function in an atmosphere of ambiguity and change?

How can libraries guarantee that all librarians are informed about the structures for publication and distribution, information economics, government information policy,
direct and indirect constraints on access to information, and the influence of information technologies?

Of course, not one of these initiatives would be sufficient to solve the professional development need but most library administrators would agree that, in combination, these initiatives lead to informed and professionally competent staff. This objective is in fact achieved by accident rather than by design in most libraries Shaughnessy (1992:283).

Among the criticisms of professional development in academic libraries is the lack of focus. While there is considerable evidence that conferences and workshop attendance promote networking and the formation of interest groups it is questionable whether the new knowledge and ideas gained at these sessions is imported into the library organisation and contribute to the desired organisational change. At Unisa the Library Staff Training and Development has began organising regular feedback sessions where attendees summarise their experiences for all the staff.

Secondly, there is even less evidence that staff who attend workshops and have become inspired and energised are able to put these new ideas into practice upon return. This gives rise to the same outcome as experienced by individuals who take a very intensive foreign language course, but who then have little opportunity to practice what they have learned and, consequently, their fluency quickly degenerates and eventually is entirely lost.

On the other hand, not to encourage professional development will eventually lead to professional obsolescence. According to Albritton (1990:238) “in order to function effectively as a professional, one must have continuing learning experiences to reinforce his or her formal education.” Formal and informal educational activities which individuals undertake to upgrade their knowledge, competencies, attitudes, and understanding serve to improve their performance as librarians and enriches their careers and supports continuing learning.
This is an important factor in our ability to motivate staff and generate real job satisfaction, particularly amongst long service staff for whom both tasks and skills have become second nature and where further development beyond upgrading may offer little stimulation.

A focussed approach to professional development is bound by the organisational context. It is directly tied to the organisation’s corporate strategy for dealing with change. This is a critical issue in academic libraries where large proportions of professional staff are tenured or hold continuous appointment, and where staff turnover is limited. In these cases, it is difficult to import staff with new skills and expertise.

Although professional development is a matter of individual choice, this choice is not made in a vacuum. Professionals are influenced by the organisational culture and peer group factors. It is in the Library’s interest, therefore, to create an environment in which staff development is valued and facilitated. This is in line with Unisa’s determination to compete as an institution whose innovation and research is valued. Organisational commitment to this activity is measured by support for and recognition of professional development. Guidance is still needed, especially in personal development, to assist those who have energy and to steer them in the right direction.

4.4.4 An annual training and development review

It is important that a link be made between staff development and staff appraisal in relation to evaluating growth in an individual’s performance through Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Jordan and Lloyd (2002:160) states that appraisal is a process by which every member of staff has a meeting at least once a year with his or her supervisor.

It is an opportunity to raise any concerns and worries the employee has and an opportunity to ask for the support the employee needs to feel more confident. For each individual, strengths can be identified and built upon, and weaknesses highlighted and eliminated.
The benefits of having appraisals include, among others, the opportunity for staff to state their achievements when there is no other channel for this, and it also makes staff feel that their contribution is actually noticed and valued.

The annual appraisal should be used to help identify training and development needs, and should also be used as one of the vehicles by which the effectiveness of identified training should be evaluated by both appraised and appraiser.

According to Noon (1992:70) staff appraisals have tended to cause some concern as they have in the past been seen largely in a negative light. That is, an appraisal session should not be used as an opportunity or a platform for disciplinary action. If a staff member is for instance taking excessive leave or performing badly, this should be addressed by the relevant supervisors or team leaders through appropriate formal channels (Brophy 2000:98).

Implemented properly, appraisal can have an entirely positive effect on performance of both individuals and organisations. Although some appraisal schemes were originally linked to performance related pay, this is now rare, as is the situation now at the Unisa Library. One of the reasons why performance related pay is no longer in favour is because it can be a divisive influence especially where staff work together in teams. To single out one member of a team for reward, sends out damaging signals about the preference given to individual effort.

The results of an appraisal should be a mutually agreed record of past performance and a plan of development for the coming year. The outcome of the discussions in terms of training and development needs, provides a regular means for reviewing and updating the rest of the training programme, to ensure that the whole process continues to contribute to a successful service.

Training and development do not exist in a vacuum, but ought to be an integral part of the Library’s objective for offering a quality service.
4.5 QUALITY

Quality embraces and unifies every element contributing to excellence, which is the fundamental goal of every Library. Quality therefore, includes the following: competitiveness, delivery, cost, morale, productivity, profit, product quality, quantity or volume, performance, service, efficiency, safety, concern for the environment and the stakeholder’s interest (Galgano 1994:4).

The all-embracing dimension of quality is particularly important at the operational level of an organisation. It is at this level that planned actions and predicted results take place. Therefore the activities that are implemented should be well balanced in all aspects related to excellence.

The four M’s of quality are manpower, materials, machinery, and methods. In the area of manpower the emphasis is on thorough quality related education and training for managers, supervisors and non-supervisors at all levels and in all departments. Fundamental to training is the idea that quality is an attitude or behaviour that must start at the top of an organisation and filter down. In so doing, quality becomes the responsibility of everyone in the organisation. As that training was inclusive to all levels and departments, improvements will come from all employees, in all functions (Barra 1983:8).

The most recent articles on training and staff development address subjects within the context of the quality of an organisation’s services, products, and processes. A number of universities have tried to adopt some of the more successful corporate strategies used to improve quality and typically these initiatives have been taken under the banner of Total Quality Management (TQM); but whatever system is used, there is no avoidance of the fact that improving the quality and effectiveness of organisations (including academic libraries) demands an extraordinary investment in staff development (Shaughnessy 1992:292).
Total quality management emphasizes that quality is a concept that, if it is to succeed, must be applied to every aspect of an organisation’s activities. TQM is concerned with cultural change, so that every individual in the organisation becomes fully committed to providing quality products and services.

Total quality management needs to start with management and, eventually, is the responsibility of every member of staff who will need to be given an opportunity to upgrade his or her skills and to thereby contribute to making the library a more effective quality driven organisation. The same has been stated by Burrill and Ledolter (1999:5) “Management has ultimate control of all resources in an organisation. It also has ultimate responsibility for the quality of all products. To make its views on quality known, management must establish a quality regulation in which it states the organisation’s commitment to quality and establishes general guidelines for supporting that policy. Management must then support the quality policy by properly managing work, workers, work processes, and the work environment “.

The initial work on quality management took place in the industrial sector, but has now spread to services including those in the private sector, and it is now widely applied in almost every field. Libraries and information services (LIS) are no exception.

St. Clair (1997:180) stated a 14-point management plan that was developed in order to seek management’s commitment to quality performance and can be adapted to the information services arena. To point out just a few points of the plan:

- improve constantly and forever every system of service. TQM is not a one-time effort, not even something that is ever accomplished.
- institute training procedures. Staff members often learn their jobs from colleagues who were improperly trained themselves.
- drive out fear so that everyone can work effectively. Library staff members must feel secure if quality is to improve.
- institute a vigorous programme of education and self-improvement for everyone. Management, professionals, and non-professional staff members should be
continually educated.

TQM and the quality focus are now essential elements of our work in information services. We recognise that we must demand quality management in order to succeed as information services providers (St. Clair 1997:181-183).

In order to have staff that can provide quality service, an organisation should take care of the education and training of staff. This will results in skilled and dedicated staff are a guarantee of quality service.

Quality is considered to be vital in improving productivity and is a key to economic survival in a competitive environment. Many organisations such as academic libraries are faced with the challenge of making their employees aware of quality related subjects.

Quality improvement depends upon the environment, systems, education and training, roles and responsibilities, and even the cost of achieving quality. Education and training of management and employees is essential for the improvement and achievement of quality, in that, to maintain an acceptable skill level, more than on-the-job training is needed.

Formal training programmes are recommended for management and employees so that the company has highly skilled and knowledgeable employees.

The programmes should be designed in such a way that they develop career skills, satisfy individual goals, help employees to acquire basic knowledge and understanding of their contribution to the company, improve communication, encourage technical vitality, and enable employees to achieve error-free performance. The programme must also help them to internalise and understand the vision and mission of the company. When staff are armed with the tools, education, and training for their job they will perform their work well. Qualified staff should be given the freedom to make decisions without always having to refer matters to superiors.
Service quality is achieved by librarians throughout the organisation by collaborating with one another and being better empowered to serve the institution’s customers. Behind the entire staff are a manager whose leadership encourages, supports, and directs the commitment to quality service and reduce the gap between expectations and the services provided (Hernon & Altman 1996:141).

Total or company-wide quality control means that everyone in the company must study, practice, and participate in quality control. Quality control courses should be put in place and made available to different divisions. After all, “quality control begins with education and ends with education,” (Ishiwara 1985:91).

4.6 SUMMARY

The training of employees is, first and foremost, the responsibility of the employer, and secondly, the responsibility of the individual employee. Career or personal development is the primary responsibility of the individual employee, and the employer should support, motivate and encourage employees in all endeavours to develop themselves.

Staff training and development are essential and must be structured and monitored to be effective and efficient. This chapter has highlighted some of the reasons for training, development and retraining. Information technology brought about changes which entail keeping up to date with the changes to stay informed, and educated, and therefore, staff needs to be trained. Again, for the library staff (both new and existing) to perform better they need orientation, on-the-job training and staff development. Personal and professional development is also one important aspect that must be carefully addressed because it makes staff happy and satisfied with their work and career. Skilled and dedicated staff are a guarantee of quality service and productivity.
CHAPTER 5
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The evaluation of staff development activity is important to assess the effectiveness of staff development undertaken for the individual, the team and the Library as a whole and to inform future planning. Saur (1996:224) observed that “without evaluation staff development runs the risk of being ad hoc, lacking direction and activity in isolation without having any relevance to either the recipient or the library.”

Monitoring effectiveness is one of the most useful ways in which training and development can be practiced in the organisation. Most organisations now link their training programmes to organisational goals. Large organisations are more likely to have a long-term strategic vision, a dedicated training function, training specialists with relevant qualifications and expertise, and a culture of training (Costine 2003:4). This chapter looks at the situation at Unisa as far as staff training and development is concerned and how the Library’s training and development is conducted.

5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter will present the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the results of the empirical study and literature survey. As mentioned in chapter two, structured interviews were conducted with divisional managers and a self-administered questionnaire was sent out to a representative sample of library staff. The self-administered questionnaire was initially pre-tested and sent out to a representative sample of ten staff members. The questionnaire responses were anonymous and interviews were confidential.

The interviews lasted 20-30 minutes with the focus on training and development, effectiveness of training and development and the centralisation of the Human Resources Department. The following are the questions (Appendix 2), p108 directed to
divisional managers during the interview and their responses have been consolidated by the researcher. Divisional managers play a strategic role in developing libraries and showing interest in librarians in learning and research, and therefore divisional managers were considered prime participants.

5.3 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(For more information see also Appendix 2, p. 108-115)

Question 1: How do you decide what training is appropriate for a specific staff member?

Answer: There was a consensus that the key performance areas and yearly appraisals for specific staff play a strong role in deciding what training to make available to staff. Staff attend training that does not relate to their KPAs, but it is the overall work that a staff member does that is usually looked at. A number of applications were turned down by LSTD because the training in question was not work related.

Question 2: What steps do you take to ensure that training that has been identified during the performance appraisal did take place?

Answer: The responsibility rests upon staff members and with a developmental plan in place, staff must take full responsibility for the training they need. The LSTD must make sure the training takes place. The majority of staff at the Unisa Library do not know that they should make sure they attend the training they request, and some staff write the same training needs each year to no avail, and they are not even questioned about the previous year’s requests. Annual appraisals are just a formality and managers are not following up on training needs. Steps were not taken to ensure that training needs identified during performance appraisals took place.
Question 3: How do you ensure that a staff member who attended a specific course is applying what he/she has learned?

There were different answers to this question, like making sure staff share knowledge gained with other staff members, requiring staff to state how s/he intends to apply what was learned to the work environment and by giving time off to staff members in order to practice and apply the knowledge gained. The problem is some staff go to so many courses that it is questionable whether they get the time to practise what they have learnt and how did the manager approve the application when these staff members have not reported on or applied what s/he has learnt. There is no formal mechanism in place to insist that staff must practice what they learned or share their newly gained knowledge with colleagues. Therefore, some staff take advantage of training to personally develop themselves with the ultimate intention of leaving the library.

Question 4: What feedback do you get from a staff member after s/he attended a course?

Answer: The LSTD organises the feedback sessions for the topics that are of interest to a large number of staff, some divisions have a monthly meeting where a staff member would share with colleagues what s/he learned from the training course, a staff member might be called by the supervisor to share the knowledge and experience and apart from all these staff are encouraged to share the knowledge with colleagues who will benefit from the exchange of information and also apply the knowledge to their jobs.

Question 5: In your opinion how effective are our training and development programmes?

Answer: There was no agreement in the responses to the above question as to the effectiveness of training and development programmes. While one respondent felt the training was very effective another thought that it was moderately effective while another thought it was only fifty percent effective.
Question 6: We used to have a Human Resources Department in the Library. Do you think it was a good idea to centralise this function?

Answer: There were those who did not favour the centralisation of the HR Department as it caused poor communication and discussion of HR related issues and some thought that general activities like administrative duties should be handled by someone in the Library. The others thought it was a good idea that all issues should be handled by a central HR department.

5.4 ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The construction of the questionnaire as well as the description of the population was described in chapter two. The responses to the questionnaire were statistically analysed and will be interpreted. A majority of the questions were close-ended questions. The software, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to enter and analyse the quantitative data. This software is most suitable for analysing data on investigations of human behaviour as it is capable of performing multivariate analysis and other statistical tests.

A survey questionnaire was sent out, by internal mail and by courier to the Unisa Main Library staff and to the staff at the Unisa Branch Libraries respectively. It was sent to 100 staff members, and 44 staff members responded. Following are the main research questions asked by the Researcher, including some comparisons which draw out information relevant to the study, and those parts of the questionnaire that were particularly useful and are indicated below.

It was investigated whether staff do receive the training they need, and what are their intentions after this, for example, to acquire higher qualifications. The researcher also wanted to find out if personal development needs, are being addressed or not, because according to the STD policies only work related training should take priority and there is actually no room for personal development. How training and development is advertised and if the mechanism is working were also investigated.
It was useful and interesting to establish how staff felt about centralisation of HR because that is the core of training and development. It is the driving force of the whole project. If it is properly organised, planned and communicated then the result will be effective, and productive to the library, organisation and to South Africa as a whole.

1. **Comparison of the professionals and non-professionals studying in the library.**

![Pie Chart]

This pie chart reveals an equal division between professional and non-professional Library staff members who are busy with further study, and it reveals that both are essential for the smooth running of an institution. The questions that come to mind are:

(i) are they all studying through Unisa or through other institutions, or both? Staff members who study through Unisa need only pay for books and registration, as the tuition is free to them;

(ii) are they all studying library science? The answer is that not all the staff are studying library science. This ties in with the responses to question 6 which revealed that 55% want to remain in the Library, 36% wish to remain in the same department and 9% wish to leave for other fields and also institutions or companies that are not related to Libraries.
Both professional and non-professional staff are valuable to an organisation. Whatever status, level, job, or position they hold, they are all important, because if any particular job is not done the neglected work ripples out, in a negative way, into the rest of the work environment. To name but a few, the Library needs cleaners, messengers, staff who make photocopies, staff who take care of the garden, or who take care of catering and so on.

The importance for all staff to upgrade their knowledge and to continue with their studies, to attend training, courses, and seminars is because most people want to love their job and they will give it their all when given the opportunity and many do so out of their own sense of determination and go further on their own steam.

For the non-professionals, some of them can, with appropriate training, go on to own cleaning companies, garden services and even become environmentalists.

2. **How many requested training through performance appraisals and their needs were addressed completely, as opposed to those who requested and their needs were not met.**

2A. **Has your training needs, requested during performance appraisal, been met?**

![Pie chart showing the distribution of training needs met: Completely 35%, Partly 35%, Not at all 30%]
The respondents were asked to indicate how their training needs were met, especially the needs requested in their performance appraisals. Out of 44, 27 responded. It was so interesting that 35% said their requests for training were met completely, 35% said that their requests were partly met and 30% said their requests for training were not met at all.

Work has been done in other divisions by managers, staff members and the LSTD to address this lack of satisfaction, but the high figure of 30% of unmet training needs is of great concern because it impacts on performance and reflects poorly on the Library’s performance appraisal process. The results reveal that the needs expressed by staff at their performance appraisal interviews, which are meant to be a formal and important opportunity to discuss outcomes and continuing professional development, are not fulfilling their purpose. The appraisal should serve as a framework document that enables an employee to enhance their existing job/ performance, and to plan their career development (where one is going, what he/she wants to be, and how he/she wants to get there).

2B. How far has the training you have received to date met the needs of your current job?
Twenty three percent of the respondents were very satisfied that their needs were met for their current job. This illustrates that these staff believe they can perform their job well, and so have fewer requirements for tools, training or skills, and perhaps experience fewer disruptions that hinder their operations, performance and productivity. Fifty eight percent of the respondents, however, are worried, and something must be done to rectify the failure to meet their needs, and to check their requirements, and hold meetings to discuss the problems, because they definitely have serious concerns that should be addressed as soon as possible. The remaining 19% appreciated the efforts made to meet their needs and so described the training programme as good in that sense, but were not entirely satisfied with the outcome.

3. Different divisions with their longer career aspirations:

3A TECHNICAL SERVICES

![Pie chart showing career aspirations]

- Remain in the library: 55%
- Remain in the same department: 36%
- Other: 9%
3B

DOCUMENT DELIVERY

- Different institution: 16%
- Remain in the library: 25%
- Different work elsewhere: 17%
- Remain in the same department: 17%
- Other: 25%

3C

CLIENT SERVICES

- Different work elsewhere: 15%
- Different institution: 8%
- Same department: 31%
- Remain in library: 23%
- Other: 23%

3D

MANAGEMENT

- Different work elsewhere: 50%
- Remain in library: 25%
- Other: 25%
Respondents (3A) were asked whether they want to remain in the Unisa Library after obtaining qualifications such as degrees, training courses, certificate courses and so on. Fifty five percent of the respondents want to remain in the Library, 36% wish to remain in the same department or division, and only 9% want to go somewhere else after completion. This is perhaps because they realise that there are no opportunities for promotion or to use the knowledge acquired. The other concern, mentioned in Chapter 1, was that “our traditional library and information assistant markets have already become pools in which other professions are beginning to fish.”

In the Client Services Division, 31% of the respondents wish to remain in the same department and 23% of the respondents wish to remain in the Library. The researcher therefore concludes that the staff in this Division are content because, essentially, 54% wish to remain at the same institution.

It is interesting to realise that only 17% of the staff in Document Delivery want to do a different job somewhere else, while 25% wish to remain in the Library. Multiskilling could be of help to the staff in this Division, since staff busy with important tasks like shelving nevertheless need variety in their job content and opportunities to meet different challenges, in order to avoid a sense of monotony and to develop skills that offer the staff a career path.
In the management division (3D), 50% of the staff want to do different work elsewhere. To me it is quite a big percentage and it can arise from different reasons, like not enjoying what they do, not enough money, the job being stressful and so on. The branch staff (3E) could be bored by some of the tasks at the branches and maybe job rotation can be an answer for some staff, because 67% of them want to remain in the profession.

4. **Was the centralization of HR a good decision?**

Fifty one percent of staff members who responded to the question of whether they think the centralisation of the HR department was a good idea or not, said “yes” and 49% said it was a bad decision.

Those who agreed it was a good decision, gave the following reasons: “so that all the training can be co-ordinated,” “HR is a specialised field and should be handled centrally by specialists” and “prevents duplication of work”.

Those who said it was a bad idea, added that “the Library needs one specialised person to attend to HR problems etc.; at the moment all the secretaries have to deal with these problems and none of us has the experience or knowledge to do HR matters”; “the Library needs an HR person to assist divisional managers with recurring HR issues such as contract renewals.”
5. How did you find out about the staff training and development programmes?

![Pie chart showing survey results]

Effective ways to publicise training programmes are essential as they should reach all the staff. One must consider that not all staff members have access to computers, but at the Unisa Library, the diagram shows that a large number of staff do use e-mail. The Internet analysts have also discovered that one of the most widely used channels of communication is e-mail and one can reach a lot of clients through e-mail, especially as there are free e-mail services that people can use worldwide. It shows that e-mail as a communication tool is one of the most effective ways of marketing training and development at Unisa though it does not reach all staff but majority of staff have access to a computer and have e-mail.

6. Compare the non-professionals and professionals who were confident
about being allowed to attend ‘work related’ training as opposed to ‘personal development’ training.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

![Pie chart showing confidence levels for personal development and work related training for professional staff.]

NON-PROFESSIONAL STAFF

![Pie chart showing confidence levels for personal development and work related training for non-professional staff.]

While keeping in mind the overall training priorities and the fact that supervisors and
employees should examine individual training requests, the following factors have to be kept in mind:

- the work relatedness of the training;
- the employee’s need for training;
- the employee’s potential for advancement;
- if the knowledge, skills and abilities will improve the employees’ performance;
- if the improved knowledge can benefit the division or the Library.

The STD policy at present emphasises work relatedness, but some staff members would like the University to also pay for their personal development which is not possible in terms of the Unisa STD policy of 2000.

There is still a problem in differentiating between the two terms “personal development” and “work relatedness” to some staff members in the Library. As a result, many problems with the rejection of applications for training are taken to the unions and even to HR for further clarification and as complaints

5.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The findings from the interviews and questionnaires show that Unisa library still has some work to do concerning training and development. The training needs of staff, especially those expressed in performance appraisals are not addressed. For staff development to work and become effective Unisa Library staff, including the management, must all agree on what makes staff development effective. The library’s managers had different answers to this question. Oldroyd (1995:14) believes that three things are really vital to the success of training and staff development within an organisation: the commitment of senior management; positive perceptions among staff; and assurance that training and staff development support departmental and institutional aims. Misconceptions about training and staff development must be corrected by the results of training and staff development.

The researcher has focussed on the objectives stated by Noon (1992:67) and compared
the findings from the interviews and questionnaires conducted in the Library against these four objectives. They are restated below:

- to provide staff at all levels with skills and competencies to contribute to an effective library and information service;
- to identify and develop new skills and competencies to ensure that the Library and Information Service (LIS) continues to provide a high quality service;
- to provide staff with the opportunity for personal and professional development for the benefit of themselves and the service;
- to monitor the training and development programme to ensure that it meets the needs of the service and its staff.

The researcher found that not all levels of staff are having their training needs met equally (see Chapter 1 where the skills that staff have and the skills they need are listed per Division).

The LSTD and departments throughout the University certainly do try to identify new skills and competencies for the staff, and they advertise these training opportunities regularly. The Library's Redevelopment Project has also identified new skills and competencies that will be needed, but as the Project has not been implemented, these have not yet impacted on the staff. There is a danger that training in the circumstances will not be timely enough to prepare the staff well for what lies ahead.

The questionnaire revealed that the majority of the staff have a negative perception about their needs for personal development being met or training related to this being approved, so while professional development is addressed by the training programme, the exclusion of personal development and the benefit of the individual as recommended by Noon suggests the Library does not follow common practice in this regard.
The monitoring by LSTD of the Library's training and development could do better and should be formally done. The findings reveal that requests for training often lead to nothing and when the training does take place, there is little formal follow up on its effectiveness.
CHAPTER 6
ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS
OF STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE UNISA
LIBRARY

6.1 INTRODUCTION TO STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AT UNISA

Human Resources is now a centralised function in the University administration. Departmental training co-ordinators have been given a mandate by central Human Resources Department to co-ordinate the training needs of their respective departments. The Library has a workgroup - the Library Staff Training and Development Workgroup (LSTD) - which consists of a co-ordinator and representatives of the different divisions. The function of the Workgroup is to ensure that training is aligned with Unisa's workplace skills and action plan, with due consideration to Unisa's Staff Training and Development (STD) policy.

The purpose of the Workgroup is to assist the Head of Department (HOD):

- to prioritise the training needs of employees in the department and to identify beneficiaries for the identified training
- to ensure that training and development needs are identified in a collaborative manner during performance appraisal sessions
- to draft a training plan which incorporates all the prioritised job-related training needs of members of the Library
- to ensure equal opportunity for all members of staff to attend training
- to keep a full record of all training related activities in the Library
- to consider applications to attend training and requests for funding
- to manage the training budget of the Library.

The Library’s Staff Training and Development (LSTD) Work Group keep a record of all training in a database. Supervisors have to ensure that all training received by their
staff (regardless of the source of funding, for example Library STD budget, University’s central STD budget, University’s Research and Bursaries fund, outside scholarships, etc.) is reported to the Library’s STD Work Group for this purpose.

The training budget for the University operates as follows: the budget allocated to staff training and development is revised and presented to each department or faculty annually. Amounts not used by the end of the year are forfeited. Training amounts cannot be carried over to the next year.

Applications for training or funding are budgeted against the training budget of the year in which the training is taken up (in other words, if training is approved in 2002 but only attended in 2003, the cost of the training will be debited against the 2003 training budget of the department or faculty).

The Unisa Library training programmes function according to the following policies:

- the Unisa Staff training and development policy
- guidelines relating to staff training and development
- guidelines and procedures relating to staff training and development, and
- Unisa’s workplace skills plan.

The Unisa Library has been in the process of re-engineering for several years, and so has not yet been able to produce a comprehensive workplace skills plan. In the meantime a list of the skills development needs based on performance appraisals was compiled and forwarded to the Human Resources Department.

6.2 CENTRALISED AND DECENTRALISED TRAINING

At Unisa, staff training is done on two levels, namely, central and departmental. Departmental training co-ordinators have been given a mandate by central Human Resources Department to co-ordinate the training needs of their respective departments. Centralised training initiatives are based on central organisational needs,
such as diversity awareness programmes, computer courses and induction training for new staff members. As a result, the initiatives are centrally driven in cooperation with the relevant departments.

Two members of the Library are on the Unisa STD Committee, that is, the Chairperson of the STD in the Library and the Union Representative. They keep the Library STD Workgroup informed about the decisions taken at the central STD meetings.

The various departments are responsible for the formulation, and budgets, of their own STD plans, and they work within the framework of the STD policy and strategic objectives of Unisa (Unisa 2000:10-11).

6.3 STAFF TRAINING AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT UNISA

Currently Unisa uses a draft Staff Training and Development (STD) Policy framework dated 2000. According to the policy, staff training and development is considered as a vital component of the overall human resources management structures of the University.

When developing the policy, Unisa encompassed the international, national and institutional context. Unisa also took into consideration the existence of global knowledge which is a major influence on higher education. This demands that staff become knowledge workers who are capable of functioning in the changing global environment.

The principle of lifelong or continuing learning is considered by Unisa as important for staff as it is for learners (Unisa 2000:2).

At the national level, Unisa’s human resources development strategy will be located within the broader national policy context. This context includes the policy objectives outlined in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as well the Employment Equity Act.
The STD at Unisa aims to improve staff competencies for quality, the ultimate aim being to serve the University’s client base. The purpose of STD as stated in Unisa’s policy is (2000:3):

- To comply with all the formal and procedural requirements set out in the relevant legislation and in Unisa’s policies
- To be competency-based, in line with the NQF, and linked to other competency-based human resources management functions
- To create opportunities for the intellectual and skills development of all employees
- To ensure that permanent employees from designated groups, as well as fixed-term employees have access to training and development opportunities at Unisa
- To create an environment that is conducive to the utilisation of training and development opportunities
- To develop a mentoring system for peers
- To provide a coordination framework for training and development (including management of the budget).

According to the Unisa Policy, Unisa complies with the requirements of both SAQA and the NQF. Departments and other operational units remain responsible for the formulation of their own staff training and development plans (Unisa 2000:11).

The Department of Human Resources Development:

- monitors all training initiatives to ensure that they are in line with Unisa’s overall strategy;
- monitors compliance with legal requirements, in particular the Skills Development Act and the Skills Development Levies Act;
- assists the Human Resources Executive to establish a career development plan for Unisa;
- assists all heads of departments / sections / units and supervisors to carry out their responsibilities in terms of staff training and development in response to
needs identified through the performance appraisal process; and
· monitors the budgets of departmental staff training and development initiatives (Unisa 2000: Annexure 3).

The policy on staff training and development has been developed, and it deals with the training needs of the designated group members. Implementation according to the report is in process. Currently Unisa has the following training initiatives aimed at employees in the designated groups:

· The Graduate School of Business Leadership sponsors opportunities for members of designated groups to enrol for management training programmes of their choice, with a view to preparing them for future leadership and management roles.
· The Institute for Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) offers sponsored courses in literacy (Unilit).
· The Department of Computer Services offers a six months’ training programme in computers.
· Unisa is in the process of looking at ways and means to implement a formal mentorship programme to replace the current informal arrangements (Phatlhane 2003: B303).

6.4 LEARNERSHIPS AT UNISA

The “train to employ programme” is implemented in the place of formal learnerships. This is as a result of problems with the Education Development Training Program (EDTP) and Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETA) that has not yet designed formal learnerships. Currently there are University graduates, about 20 in number, who have undergone this type of training. The intended objective is for these graduates to be absorbed into employment, by Unisa or by other institutions, companies, or in the public sector.
The aim of the programme is to provide the learner with skills, experience and competencies in different disciplines and fields, for example, Computers, Finance, and Production. The employee is contracted for twelve months after which s/he gets a certificate of acknowledgement (Phatlhane 2003:B303). As far as the Library is concerned, there are not yet any learnership programmes in place.

The Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) are also worth mentioning because they deals with education and training which is what this study is about and we need to know what the library situation is concerning SETAs.

6.5 THE LIBRARY STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT WORKGROUP

The Unisa Library Staff Training and Development Workgroup (LSTD) only focuses on, and approves, job related requests from staff and not those dealing with personal development. This is in line with Unisa's central Human Resources policy. In addition, programmes for staff exchange, job rotation and for mentoring will be included in the Library's Redevelopment Project, but at present these do not exist.

However the following training and development areas were identified in the Library’s Employment Equity plan, and are being addressed by the Library Staff Training and Development Workgroup:

- literacy
- skills training
- leadership training
- technical training
- managing diversity.

Academic libraries have tried to address these questions through a variety of strategies and programmes. At the Unisa Library, professional development is supported by allowing study leave, examination leave, time to attend conferences and workshops, in-house seminars, visiting lectureship programmes and involvement in committees or
workgroups.

The implementation of the Library’s Re-Engineering Project (also known as the “Redevelopment Project”) is still pending and this has delayed both decision-making and outcomes, for example, the drafting of guidelines for Library Management to follow with regard to transfers, mentorship, or job rotation. Failure to implement or take action to address such issues has resulted in barriers to Employment Equity which are set out below:

- job rotation is not possible as it leads to problems with the unions;
- training and development given to staff outside their current job requirements raises unrealistic expectations about their chance to obtain a better position. Staff selected for fast-track development outside their current job needs is seen as being unfairly groomed for a specific position. As a result, the abilities, skills and talents of staff are sometimes not utilised;
- currently there are no promotions, and consequently there is no recognition for good work.

The Library’s Re-engineering Project has identified secondary roles. A secondary role is a voluntary leadership role that is performed within the framework and benefits of a staff member’s normal salary and benefits. It is performed in conjunction with the main or primary work indicated in the person’s job description. In this sense it is non-operational work, although those performing secondary roles will be given time to carry out their secondary roles. Secondary roles will be recognised as part of an employee’s work and s/he will be appraised on their performance in any secondary role.

One of the secondary leadership roles is that of Mentor. It is one of the Library’s Employment Equity strategies to encourage mentoring as a means to develop staff, particularly staff members from the designated groups, and to create a mentorship culture. (Unisa 2000:11).
According to Watson & Callahan (1995:377), “continuing education is learning opportunities utilised by individuals in fulfilling their need to learn and grow personally and professionally. It encompasses a range of activities designed to provide all levels and categories of Library staff - professional, support staff, part-time employees, volunteers and non-professionals with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for them to meet their current responsibilities and to adapt to future changes.”

6.6 THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE UNISA STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME MEETS ITS LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

The framework of legal obligations which any employer must meet was discussed earlier in Chapter 3, and here we will take a look at whether or not the Unisa Library is meeting its legal obligations. Again, the reader is cautioned to bear in mind that the researcher is a layperson, and therefore this section is perforce written from that limited viewpoint.

The Unisa Library would appear to be meeting its obligations in terms of the Skills Development Act 97 of 1998. It certainly has a staff training and development programme in place, it carries out performance appraisals and both encourages requests for training during the appraisal interview and promotes a culture of professional development and participation. The Library (and the University of South Africa) do comply with the Skills Development Levies Act 9 of 1999, and the Library does apply for the funds that arise out of the Act for training purposes. A problematic area, in terms of the findings of this study, is that the Library is still developing a Performance Management System which would not only link achievement to incentives, but would be accountable for ensuring that requests for training do not go unanswered and for monitoring the effectiveness of any training that does take place.

In terms of the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, the findings revealed that there is a commitment to meeting the representative departmental profiles recommended by the Act and Employment Equity Plans have been drawn up at the University level and within the Library itself. There has also been an express attempt to widen access to training for
the designated groups specified in the Act and to develop staff through job enrichment and training opportunities in order to assist their development and opportunities for advancement, and intentions in this area appear to be good. The research study did uncover two barriers, a term drawn from the Employment Equity Act, to staff development that the Library might find it beneficial to address.

The first barrier to staff development lies in the criteria of work-relatedness. Training has to be work-related before it can meet with approval. This means that training which might develop the individual, apart from their role at work, has to be rejected.

The second barrier comes in the form of delay. The Library's Redevelopment Project has placed many decisions on hold, and staff are sometimes refused training or development with the explanation that a request can only be met when the implementation of the Redevelopment Project takes place. Staff who wish to be trained in preparation for the new Library are therefore being failed by the system, and in such circumstances, delay becomes a form of denial.

With regard to the SETAs, this is a problem at national level which has filtered down to the way the Library operates, and is not really in the Library's hands at this point. The Library training and development programmes do comply with SAQA and NQF standards, and there is a commitment at University level to learnerships and the Library has indicated a willingness to participate in a learnership programme when the Library Redevelopment Project is implemented.

The Unisa Library does comply with its legal obligations and to a large extent, it does meet the standards set by common practice as expressed in the literature. The findings from the interviews and questionnaires do show however that there is some way to go before the staff training and development efforts are as effective as they could be.
CHAPTER 7
RECOMMENDATIONS

The Library occupies a focal position in the University. Due to the numerous IT and institutional changes taking place, academic librarians require greater knowledge and ability to apply modern management strategies and techniques to ensure efficient and effective use of human and material resources. This chapter provides the recommendations from the literature; from the findings of the interviews and questionnaires conducted and from the legal aspects of training and development at Unisa. The research questions posed in chapter 1 are also dealt with here.

7.1 JOB RELATED TRAINING

The fact that the STD policy stress the job related training makes it difficult for personal development to be addressed and this can be seen as a barrier to staff development. There are no guidelines as how to address personal development requests and this creates a lot of unhappiness among staff and those who are responsible for training and development.

It is recommended that management should support and encourage training and also try and initiate those training courses that are work related and compatible to the Library and organisational goals.

The Library certainly has good intentions towards its staff but it could do better, especially if it were:

- to look at training in the broadest sense and include some degree of personal development and training in the policy documents (at the University and at the Library level);
- to take prompt action rather than leave staff development and training issues in a state of limbo for prolonged periods of time;
- to find a way to prevent requests for training from "slipping through the cracks."
7.2 ON THE JOB TRAINING

The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998 states that both personal and work related training are essential in developing and educating the South African workforce. The SETAs are also still in the process of establishment so Unisa Library like every academic Library in the country are still awaiting the progress of this sector. The skills development levy is paid regularly by Unisa and as a result staff do have money for training and development that in some cases is forfeited because staff have not undergone enough training.

Bridgland (1997:151) says: “Professionalism relies increasingly on an ability to respond rapidly to changing market conditions, to client requirements and to the influence of technology and government policies. Keeping “up-to-date” is no longer optional - it is essential for professional and organisational success. Continuing Professional Education (CPE) is recognised by many professions as providing an answer.”

7.3 TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS

One way of meeting this challenge, as Effah (1998:41) suggested, is to train and develop academic librarians in a more structured, consistent and systematic manner based on a proper training needs analysis. He goes on to say that the fullest use of all avenues for training and staff development should be explored.

The performance of employees can be discussed during appraisals which should be viewed together with the training and development of staff, because it helps identify training needs which have to be met if staff are to improve their performance. It is recommended that management encourage all employees to pursue training and development opportunities. It is through the growth and improvement of the Library’s individual employees that the Library and the University will grow and improve. The findings from both interviews shows that we need to address the staff’s training needs, monitor the feedback in reports and the application of what staff have learnt, provide the opportunity and time for staff to practice, communicate the same message
to all employees about staff development and training and also follow the policies and guidelines of the University and encourage staff to attend training courses.

7.4 TRAINING PLAN

Staff development is a programme which guides and encourages employees to develop their skills and capabilities on a continuing basis. The intent is to improve the performance of both the individual and the organisation and to maximize staff effectiveness. Staff development serves institutional needs and enhances the ability of the organisation to meet its goals. In order for an organisation to meet its goals, there has to be a plan that serves as a guide to thinking, taking action, and decision-making for managers, supervisors, and staff. Policies provide this type of guidance and direction, and they need to be there to give a framework to the specific guidelines under which the operations of the Library fall.

A progressive career ladder (i.e. succession planning) is crucial to encourage valuable people to stay with the organisation and make a career out of library support work. The continued health and growth of an organisation can be ensured when employees are retained, and this can be achieved by, among other things, offering the staff recognition and career planning (Goulding 1996:77).

If from each division or department or team, an individual staff member can have their vision, mission, and goals stated clearly and even put out for everybody to see, staff will have a better direction, knowledge and understanding of how they actually contribute to the vision and mission of the organisation. In other words effective practices are usually aligned with the library’s mission as articulated in strategic plans.
7.5 GUIDE TO ASSESSING TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS

It is suggested that the Library should devise a guide to the assessment of training effectiveness. The guide should offer useful evaluation criteria which cover the needs, objectives, achievements and constraints affecting training.

The importance of staff training has been demonstrated throughout as it enables individuals to perform their work more effectively and efficiently, and therefore to the greater benefit of the staff and clients. It also increases job satisfaction, professional awareness and aids career advancement.

Empowering staff to make use of opportunities will result in a quality organisation that will deliver quality service by quality staff.

Effective practices, aligned with the Library’s mission have outcomes that are measurable, sustainable, cost-effective and have a long-term impact on the Library and its constituents.

7.6 HOLISTIC APPROACH

The education and training of the workforce requires the involvement of the entire organisation, not just a training department, if training is to be effective in improving the performance of our organisation.

Library effectiveness depends on the good work and dedication of each individual staff member.

Regular structured supervision is needed, where the employee can discuss and request assistance for the challenges currently being faced in his/her role, recommend solutions, receive feedback from their line managers about performance on the job (not necessarily criticism but also positive reflections about achievement), ongoing monitoring of targets set at the yearly appraisal and ongoing assessment of training and support needs.
If professionals and managers can be treated the same when it comes to remuneration, so as to encourage the full potential of service and if society could do away with status then people will be encouraged to give more of what they are good at. To give an example, a librarian who is a very experienced cataloguer may be promoted to a leadership position in the cataloguing division. However, s/he may not have the necessary leadership skills and would be less productive in the new position.

Staff should be asked to evaluate their supervisor and manager as part of the latter’s performance appraisal. Staff in teams could also evaluate each other’s performance.

Heads of department, managers, and supervisors should be given an opportunity to perform the operational tasks of each division or department for about a week, “a return to the floor” as it were, in order to obtain a more insightful understanding of the overall picture, for example, they might do a literature search for a client, handle a difficult or demanding client, install software, unpack and sort the post. If one has good, experienced, leadership in an organisation, with qualities, skills and abilities, then they will be able to encourage, support, help and understand the staff and also decide and argue about facts that they know and have experienced. Thus, it starts at the top and if the insight there is deep, then the rest will fall into the right place and fit well together like a jigsaw puzzle.

7.7 LEARNERSHIPS

It is recommended that the Library implements learnership programmes.

7.8 CENTRALISATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES

The questionnaires also showed that 50% of the staff surveyed think that it was good to centralise the HR. This divided response leads one to conclude that there are a lot of problems underlying this decision.
7.9 PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is recommended that action should be taken in spite of the fact that the Library Redevelopment Project has delayed many advances in the Library and therefore a lot of policies, plans, regulations are pending.

It is important to ensure that personal development is addressed because it is one of the main objectives of an effective staff development programme.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Molepo, C. 2004. “Libraries and SETAs”. E-mail to Kataila Ramalibana. 11 November.


Rodriques, T. 2005. “SGBs”. E-mail to Kataila Ramalibana. 31 October.


Appendix 1

An investigation of the effectiveness of staff development policies and programmes in the Unisa Library

Please answer the following questions with regard to the effectiveness of staff development policies and programmes in Unisa Library.

A. Personal details

1. Gender:

| Male | Female |

2. Current work location (please specify division):

| technical services |  |
| client services |  |
| document delivery |  |
| management services |  |
| branches |  |

3. Work level:

| management |  |
| professional |  |
| non-professional |  |
4. How long have you been employed at the Unisa Library?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-5 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-7 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-10 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 10 years</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

B. Training and development needs

5. How are your training and development needs identified?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>discussion by appointment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during performance appraisal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff review and development meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I identify my own training and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Do you receive advice and support for your training and development from your supervisor/manager?

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If yes, is this:

<p>| | |</p>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very useful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>useful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not helpful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If no, do you feel you would have benefited from such advice?
7. How important is it to you to have opportunities for ongoing training and development?

- very important
- important
- somewhat important
- not important

8. Why are such opportunities important to you or why not?

9. How far has the training you have received to date met the needs of your current job?

- satisfactorily
- very satisfactorily
- good

10. What could the Library’s Staff Training and Development Workgroup do to assist your personal development?

11.(a) Have you requested any training in earlier performance appraisals? If yes, were those training needs addressed:
101

11. (b) If you answered “partly” or “not at all” to 11 (a), what reasons, if any, were you given?

11. (c) Have you requested any other training:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lectures</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>advertised training courses, seminars, workshops, online courses etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. (d) Who did you request training from?

12. Has your performance ever been affected negatively by training not being provided?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Has your performance ever been affected positively by training being provided?
C. Staff training and development policies and programmes at Unisa

13. Are you aware of the Training and Development Programme offered by the University’s Staff Training and Development Skills Department:

| yes | no |

If yes, how did you find out about the Staff Training Development programmes:

- brochure
- web site
- email
- department
- supervisor
- colleagues
- other

14. If you wished to attend a training course that was relevant to the work you are doing, how confident were you that you would be allowed to attend:

| very confident | fairly confident | not at all confident |

15. If you wished to attend training related to personal development or with a view to a change of career, how confident were you that you would be allowed to attend:
very confident
fairly confident
not at all confident

16. What would your preferred method of receiving information on the Staff Training and Development programmes be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>brochure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>web site</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>email</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>department</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supervisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colleagues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. What types of ongoing education programmes have you participated in within the last year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>workshop</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seminar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teleconference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>video presentation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>training session</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>online course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. What effect did these activities or programmes have on your present job performance?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>greatly improved performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improved performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had little effect on performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had no effect on performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. How well is your need for ongoing training and skills development being met?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>very well</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adequately</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than adequately</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. If you are not satisfied with the training opportunities currently available to you, please indicate why not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>topics that would help me are not offered</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>times offered are not convenient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>locations offered are not convenient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>too expensive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What other training besides that offered by the University do you think could be offered?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>communication skills</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>time management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how to conduct and behave in meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. Do you know about the University’s Staff training and development policy document?

| yes |   |
22. Do you understand what the term “work relatedness” means?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

D. Career development in the Library

23.(a) Have you given thought to your future career development? For example: are you aware of the career options open to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not sure</td>
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</table>

23. (b) do you know how to find out more about the range of future career options open to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not sure</td>
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</table>

23. (c) do you have a clear idea of the skills, abilities and knowledge you have developed which would be of value to future employers both in the higher education sector and elsewhere?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not sure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24. What are your longer term career aspirations?

| remain in the library |    |

105
remain in the same department/division
remain in the library field but at a different institution
look for different work elsewhere
other

25. Are you busy with studies, and for which degree?

yes
no
if yes, specify degree

26. If you are registered to study, please rank the following for pursuing your studies in their order of importance to the pursuit of your studies (1 being most important and 5 least important)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>to obtain university/college credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to work towards job advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to get the 13\textsuperscript{th} cheque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for personal growth/greater job satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other (please describe)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. Do you get any help, support, information, and feedback from your supervisor concerning career related issues?

yes
no
not much

28. Do you think that the centralisation of the human resources department at Unisa library was a good decision?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
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Why?

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Thank you
Appendix 2

An investigation of the effectiveness of staff development policies and programmes in the Unisa Library

Structured interview questions Answers

1. I know there is a lot of debate around the issue of whose responsibility it is to develop staff. Who do you think must take this responsibility?

   · It is the responsibility of the organisation to see to it that they develop staff as stated in the Skills Development Act and also using the Skills development levies as Unisa complies with all formal and procedural requirements prescribed by the act.
   The staff member is also responsible for his/her career path.

   · The following people are responsible:
   the staff member must request training because he knows what skills he requires for him to perform well;
   the supervisor and departmental heads create a climate which encourages staff development and training, provide resources and support to staff members;

   the staff development and training (STD) coordinators provide the money and also make sure that staff do attend and are aware of the necessary training;
   and

   the employer (those responsible for policies)

   · It is the responsibility of the division manager and it is also the staff member’s responsibility if he/she is interested because it is about developing oneself and acquiring skills.

   The Supervisor of the staff member should identify areas in which training is needed. This can be done during the annual performance appraisal exercise. Training should take place within a period of one year.

   · The Supervisor should look at the personal well-being of staff and their performance and from that also suggest training which is work related and will result in improving performance like a course on “financial fitness”.

   The staff member, however, also has a responsibility to inform his/her supervisor of training that is needed in order to fulfil his/her duties
2. **How do you decide what are the training needs of a specific team?**
   - The training needs of a specific team should be directly related to their work.
   - Look to see if the training is work related.
   - The training needs of a specific team should be directly related to their work.
   - *If the training is work related and if it is going to be of benefit to the Library.*

3. **How do you decide what training is appropriate for a specific staff member?**
   - I look at the key performance areas (KPAs), and secondary roles that he performs, and his personal needs.
   - Depends on job description or developmental need to be investigated and how it does change. If it’s to support a secondary role staff member has to say so.
   - The staff member’s training needs are discussed during the Performance Appraisal exercise. The staff member usually tells the Supervisor what training he/she needs. The Supervisor should also be aware of gaps in the staff member’s performance that could be addressed by training. The training should, however, be directly related to their work.
   - We discuss the needs during performance appraisal sessions and also looking at one’s Key Performance Areas. Another important thing is the course or training must be work related.

4. **What steps do you take to ensure that training that has been identified during performance appraisal did take place?**
   - The responsibility rests upon staff members. They must make sure they request training and take it to the supervisor for approval, then to the STD for final approval and funds.
   - Developmental plan has to be there. Subtract developmental plan from division and send through to Library Staff Training and Development. If there is a need for that person to attend training; and staff must take full responsibility for the training they need.
   - After the performance appraisal exercises the LSTD Workgroup requests that all training needs identified during the performance appraisal exercises, be sent to them. They are then responsible for identifying the appropriate courses, etc. that staff members can attend. They also deal with the booking,
Six months after the performance appraisal exercises a meeting is scheduled with the Supervisor of the specific section to assess whether training and any other problems identified, have received the necessary attention.

- It is up on the staff member it see to it that the development plan that was agreed upon during the discussion with the supervisor takes place. Staff has to apply for the particular training, hand it in to the supervisor for approval then to the LSTD.

5. **When you give permission to one of your staff members to attend a course, how do you make sure that the content of the course is of high standard? in other words, how do you find out about the quality of the course?**

- It is the job of the LSTD to make sure that the course does meet the SAQA requirements, and by checking the programme itself to see if it covers the requested needs and also the reputation of the course presenters.

- Check programme and know people in your line; knowledge and experience of evaluation of content. When a staff member is back from training/conference he is expected to share with others/team or can develop others.

- The courses are identified by the LSTD Workgroup. They are responsible to ensure that the content of the course is of a high standard.

- The staff member must investigate, compare and provide all details about the course to the supervisor who will look at it and pass it on to LSTD for final checking and approval.

6. **How do you ensure that a staff member who attended a specific course is applying what he/she has learned?**

- You see some courses are technical and some are practical, where a staff member can apply the knowledge to improve his work.

- Staff member should transfer knowledge to others.

- After attending the course, the staff member will be asked how he/she intends to apply what was learned at the course.

- As a supervisor I will support and give time off for a staff to practise and apply the knowledge gained.
7. **What feedback do you get from a staff member after he/she attended a course?**

- We do get feedback from staff which is organised by the LSTD and apart from that we do ask some staff members, depending on the course, but there is no formal mechanism.

- That the training will benefit him and others in the team and he will develop the others.

- It is very seldom that the staff member will come to the supervisor to provide him/her with feedback. I will therefore call the staff member to come and give me his/her impressions of the training.

- Apart from giving feedback at the monthly LSTD sessions, I think more should be done concerning feedback so that we can see how the training has benefited the Library (*and the staff member*) or what improvement has one done so far after attending a course or training.

8. **Do you think that you as a manager must also take responsibility to make staff members aware of applicable up-coming training? Please explain your answer.**

- No, it is a staff member’s responsibility, but if it comes to my attention then I will forward it to the whole division.

- Yes, I must be on the look out and encourage staff members but it is also the staff member’s responsibility if they see training advertised to apply.

- Yes. The information will be cascaded to the Section Heads for their information and attention. It is possible that news about up-coming training will become available during the course of the year. It is therefore important that staff members be made aware of any other courses.

- Yes, if I happen to come across training, courses, workshops that I think will benefit the Library or the organisation then I send them through to alert those that might not have seen them.

9. **How often do you inform staff about the LSTD documents so that they become familiar with the contents?**

- The staff members in my division are familiar with the LSTD documents and haven’t heard any queries concerning the documents.

- Quite often, and they are familiar with the contents of the document, and it is also of benefit to the Library.

- I don't inform them. They are made aware of any documentation by e-mails
which are sent out by the LSTD Workgroup.

- I have monthly and weekly *meetings* with team leaders where we discuss issues that are new or that staff must know or have problems understanding them. I also use email to reach all staff to convey information from the LSTD or from Human resource.

10. **In your opinion how effective are our training and development programmes?**

- I think moderately effective because if the courses are work related, that is good as far as the LSTD is concerned and if they also meet SAQA requirements then to me they are effective.

- Involved in many of the programmes and they are good because they develop staff.

- It is very effective. Staff members now get the chance to go on training courses which, in the past, was the prerogative of the Library Management Team only.

- I can say fifty percent effective and fifty percent not effective because we don’t monitor the success of our training and development in that some staff still come back and not make any effort to apply the knowledge, or share the knowledge by reporting or even training others who didn’t attend or showing improvement due to the news things learnt.

Another problem is, not only senior staff must attend conferences, certain course and so on even junior staff must be given an opportunity to attend and be exposed to these kind of things. *Staff should also be compelled to write reports after attending: conferences, workshops and training.*

11. **Do you think that career counselling must be a part of the Library’s staff development policy? Please explain your answer.**

- Yes, but career counselling must be formalised by the Human Resources Department through Library policy.

- Yes, staff members need career counseling and they should be aware of the need to transfer skills or knowledge to the others, even if it is just the basics.

- Yes - only if applied to the staff member’s current job.

- Yes, some staff members are studying for courses that are not relevant to their work and therefore will not benefit the library, if possible supervisors should guide their staff in career development because at the end of the day it is the money and time of an organisation wasted if I can put it that way on staff that pursue careers that are irrelevant to their work and afterwards leave the organisation.
12. **Mentorship is taking place in the Library on a spontaneous basis at this stage. Do you think that mentorship must also be handled on a structured basis in the library as part of the staff development programmes?**

- Mentoring must also be formalised.

- Definitely. The way I think we should always have a good relationship and it becomes good for the organisation and develops a person and people should be aware of that.

- No, I don’t think that mentorship should be handled on a structured basis in the library as part of the staff development programmes. Something similar was tried during the re-engineering process in the Library. Staff members were appointed to assist (?) the Champions during the discussions with the consultants. They seldom turned up for the meetings and didn’t attend the weekly meeting meetings so that their progress could be monitored and discussed.

- Yes, for supervisors is sometimes difficult but if they can it would be good and mentoring must also be encouraged from team leaders down to other staff.

13. **We used to have a Human Resources Department in the Library. Do you think it was a good idea to centralised this?**

- Yes, there are specialised human resources issues that must be handled by a human resources specialist who is not a librarian, and again, no, to general activities like administrative duties that must be handled by the someone in the library and that person will then take them to human resource, like performance appraisals.

- No, there is a gap; there should be a forum to discuss issues. HR should bring feedback to clients/members. Strategies that can take Library forward and contribute with all stakeholders.

- Yes. It does not matter where the HR Department is situated in the University. The fact that we had a HR Department in the Library was a nice to have.

- I think it was better to centralise it because it protects both the staff members and supervisors as far as record keeping is concerned let the records be kept at human resources department. The Human Resources' forum (*in the Library*) has been suggested and been approved for the interim to be a go between
14. **Who takes care of your training needs as a manager?**

- No one; I take care of my own training.
- Appraised by Departmental Head. Depends on self - manager should take the training into his own hands.
- My immediate supervisor, the Head of the Division, is supposed to take care of my training needs. Training identified during the last PA has not yet been addressed by her.
- Myself and my supervisor.

15. **How would you describe an effective library staff development programme?**

- a. coaching
- b. continuing professional development like attending conferences, workshops,
- c. doing research and publication, participating in professional leadership roles in professional bodies like GAELIC
- d. mentoring component

- Staff seen by clients to be knowledgeable, then you will know that you render a good service because your clients will be happy.
- One that is managed properly by the workgroup appointed to do so and addresses the real training needs of staff.
- For a library staff development programme to be effective it should comply with the Skills Development Act procedures, also when the staff members and supervisors work well together to support development.

  If the staff development programmes benefit the Library and the organisation and the improvements, and changes are visible enough. Monitoring is also important it will help the library to find out if they are winning in what they want to achieve as far as staff development is concerned.

16. **What needs to be changed to the Unisa Library’s staff development programme to make it effective?**

- The Library Staff Development Training coordinators must be part of or work closely with human resources and be included in their meetings and other forums in order for them to get all the stakeholders’ opinions like they will be exposed to the unions, the Equity department, training and development specialist and the human resources.
· They should have a good structure and see what the needs of the staff are and we will achieve better performance.

· Nothing. At this stage it is, according to my opinion, functioning very well.

· Quality control should be done in a proper way.
Appendix 3

Kataila Ramalibana (Ms)
Library Services
Level 08 - 20
Unisa

29 July 2004

Dear Colleague,

As part of the requirements for a Master’s Degree in Information Science, I am conducting a study on “An investigation of the effectiveness of staff development policies and programmes in the Unisa Library.”

The research is intended to bring out the present strengths and weaknesses in the training and development policies and programmes in the Library, and to find out whether they are productive and effective.

The time and effort it takes to complete this questionnaire is much appreciated and it will make a significant contribution both to my research and to the Library, the Convenor and members of the STD Workgroup, the programme and policy makers, and the University at large. It is important to find out if staff are satisfied and if we can improve on what we are doing, and to be made aware of the pitfalls surrounding staff training and development, and whether the centralisation of the Human Resources function is working well, or not. Other Library institutions will benefit too, once the findings are published.

Thus, you are kindly requested to spare some of your precious time to answer, as carefully and fully as possible, all the questions in this survey. Please rest assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of your completed questionnaire.

I will be grateful if the completed questionnaire can be returned before the 23 August 2004.

Thank you once again for your time and input.

Yours sincerely,

Kataila Ramalibana
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Attached please find a questionnaire compiled by Ms KM Ramalibana, Web developer, Unisa Library.

The questionnaire is part of research for the MBibl at the University of South Africa with the topic: “An investigation of the effectiveness of staff development policies and programmes in the Unisa Library”.

Your input will contribute to the outcomes of the research and will be highly appreciated.

The research is intended to bring out the present strengths and weaknesses in the training and development policies and programmes in the Library, and to find out whether they are productive and effective. The convenor of the Staff Training and Development (STD) Workgroup and its members, the programme and policy makers, will also benefit from the research in that they will have concrete information on the efficacy of their programmes and in order to design better programmes and to evaluate the usefulness of comparative research findings in this area.

Kind regards

[Signature]

DR JC HENNING
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: LIBRARY

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