

Approved at the STLSC of 18 October 2010



IMPLEMENTING THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR STUDENT SUPPORT AT UNISA

A PROPOSAL FOR 2011-2013

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Student support at Unisa is provided by a range of stakeholders and the various stakeholders render academic, affective and administrative support to students. While a range of student support services are available to all students, specific support (eg face-to-face tutorials, video and satellite broadcasting, counseling services, etc) are often only realised depending on a range of factors such as the focus of the service rendered, the number of students in a specific geographic region, the necessary academic expertise, the time the service is offered, etc. At present most of the institutional student support interventions (eg counseling, social, financial support services, etc) are available free-of-charge to all students depending on the availability of the service, etc. Currently face-to-face tutorials are rendered at a small extra cost to students. Student support at Unisa will comprise of three distinct 'types' of student support namely *cognitive* (academic), *affective* (emotional or pastoral and social) and *administrative* support. Different stakeholders at Unisa share these responsibilities, albeit often in uncoordinated and overlapping ways.

This proposal has as aim to initiate four main thrusts namely to

- firstly enhance and improve the quality and effectiveness of all current student support initiatives including student support rendered by a range of stakeholders such as academics, TSDL, DCCAD, etc;
- secondly, to pilot technology enhanced student support to specific identified groups of students at specific points in their learning journeys by all stakeholders, but specifically aimed at introducing E-Tutors and/or E-Mentors;
- thirdly, to design and use interactive computer marked self-assessment tools and
- fourthly, to use a range of technologies more effectively to communicate to specific groups of students at specific junctures of their student walk.

These four thrusts is not the final word on student support at Unisa but are specifically aimed at reaching the up-to-now unreached students from 2011-2013. This will lay the foundation for an iterative process of continuous innovation and quality assurance in student support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Since 1995 student support at Unisa has grown through the vision, commitment and leadership of individuals, often without broad-based institutional support and understanding. This proposal builds on the work and initiatives of these various individuals, teams and initiatives.
- Since 2007 Unisa grew in understanding the complexities of ODL as we grow towards becoming a fully-fledged ODL institution in the specific context of South African and the continent of Africa. This document salutes the staff that dedicated their energies and passion into tirelessly, and often with insufficient institutional support, tried to realise ODL.
- In 2010 Dr Japie Heydenrych (then from DSPQA) provided leadership in ODL Task Team 4: Student Support. Under his leadership a conceptual framework for student support at Unisa was tabled at the Senate meeting of 2 June and accepted.
- In the second semester, ODL Task teams 4 (Student support) and 6 (Student retention and success) worked closer together under the leadership of Prof George Subotzky (Executive Director: Information and Strategic Analysis) and the synergy between these two teams resulted in many of the insights in this document.
- I would like to specifically thank Ms Mahlapane Molatlhegi and Ms Nelisa Tshaka (both from TSDL), Ms Francette Myburgh (ICT), Mr Louis Eloff (HR) and members of ODL Task team 6: Student success and retention, who critically engaged with various versions of this document.
- The support and guidance the ODL Project received from Prof Makhanya (Prof Vice-Chancellor and Vice Chancellor Designate), Prof Maré (Vice-Principal: Academic and Research), Prof Mosoma (Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Principal: Student Affairs and Learner Support), Prof Havenga (Academic Planner), Prof Ryan (Executive Director: Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor) and Dr Mokhaba (Executive Director: Learner Support) provided the different ODL teams with a 'safe' space to explore the complexities of ODL.
- A previous draft was circulated to members of ODL Task teams 4 (Student support) and 6 (Student retention and success) and discussed at a meeting on 1 September. Input was received after the meeting of a range of individuals and stakeholders.

1 INTRODUCTION

On 2 June, Unisa's Senate accepted the "Conceptual framework for student support at Unisa" as proposed by ODL Task team 4. Since then there had been several meetings with a range of stakeholders and smaller working teams exploring different aspects of the accepted framework. The "Conceptual framework for student support at Unisa" provides a rich foundation for student support in an ODL context.

This proposal builds on the foundation of the conceptual framework and will for some years to come, provide the basis for continued innovation and adaptation. This document does not claim to be the final word on the conceptual framework, but rather the first attempt to start implementing the framework. This proposal is based on four key elements namely

- i. Increasing the effectiveness and quality of *current* student support initiatives
- ii. Exploring E-Tutoring and E-Mentoring
- iii. Interactive computer marked (ISM) self-assessment
- iv. Timely automated SMS to students

The "Conceptual framework for student support at Unisa" emphasises offering integrated, coherent, holistic and where possible and appropriate, customized student support focused on three distinct phases of the student walk namely at entering higher education, in teaching and learning and exiting higher education. This proposal refines the accepted framework by using as heuristic three types of student support namely academic (cognitive), affective (pastoral) and administrative support.



Please take note that this document does not claim to present a complete picture of all current and envisaged student support initiatives and strategies at Unisa. At present there are many stakeholders offering a wide range of student support services and initiatives to a range of students in diverse contexts and at different times. It may therefore be that there are gaps in the current document or that important initiatives or even stakeholders are not mentioned. While this is regrettable, any omissions are unintentional. Recommendations 6.1 and 6.2 proposes an institutional audit on all current and envisaged student support (cognitive, affective and administrative) initiatives in order to have a clearer and strategic understanding of any duplication and/or gaps.

2 SYNOPSIS OF THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR STUDENT SUPPORT AT UNISA

The “Conceptual framework for student support at Unisa” proposes student support as being

- i. Student-centered
- ii. Efficient and affordable
- iii. Formalised and planned as well as informal and spontaneous
- iv. Integrated coherently into the main learning experience from curriculum planning, the planning of formative and summative assessment, the offering of tutorial and counseling services and the use of technologies.
- v. Offering appropriate, and where possible, customized student support
- vi. Focused on three distinct periods in students’ engagement with Unisa namely entering higher education, the learning journey (student walk) and exiting higher education

3 SOME KEY TRENDS OF THE *CURRENT* STUDENT SUPPORT MODEL AT UNISA

- i. All students at Unisa (undergraduate and postgraduate) have access (depending on various factors like discipline, HEQF level, geographical location, availability of expertise, etc) to a range of student support services ranging from general in-text support in courseware, to face-to-face (F2F) tutorials and counselling services, group discussions by academics to selected regions, administrative support delivered by central and regional offices and video and satellite broadcasts.
- ii. F2F tutorial services are rendered at an extra minimum cost per student on provision that there are a minimum amount of students per regional centre, suitably qualified persons to fulfil the tutorial role or specific academic department requests for such tutorials. Video conferencing is used to provide services to centres where there are no qualified tutors locally.
- iii. F2F tutorials mostly take place on Saturdays.
- iv. Traditionally group discussion visits by lecturers to selected regions took place during the week but are increasingly offered on Saturdays with the resultant clashes between tutorial classes and discussion classes, lack of facilities, students missing other tutorials if they attend group discussion classes, etc.

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- v. F2F tutorials are offered to HEQF 5, HEQF 6 and some HEQF 7 and some postgraduate modules (in 2010 there were 3 postgraduate tutorial classes offered on request by the School of Education).
- vi. Tutorial enrolments increased from 22 413 students attending tutorials in 2005, to 34 538 students attending tutorials in 2010 (August). The number of modules attended by students in tutorials increased from 56 571 in 2005 to 96 006 in 2010 (August) (**Appendix 1**).
- vii. The number of tutors increased from 440 in 2005 to 981 in 2010 (August) while the number of modules covered by these tutors stand at 1 753 in 2010 (August) (**Appendix 1**).
- viii. The percentage of students registered for F2F tutorials in context of the *total* student population is less than 15% and not all of the students registered for F2F tutorials attend on a regular basis. The same trend is found in the Science Foundation Programme where students are identified as being at-risk and allocated to a tutor with F2F tutorials free of charge, but the majority of these students don't attend.
- ix. The *direct* correlation between attendance of F2F tutorials and student success is more complex than often assumed. Some students attend in the beginning but then become self-sufficient and stop attending. These students may be considered as 'drop-outs' in the F2F tutorial programme, but actually, they have become self-sufficient. Other students only attend those sessions in which they consider themselves to be vulnerable. It is therefore almost impossible to make generalised statements between students who attend F2F tutorial programmes and their success or failure. A differentiated analysis on students' attendance, their reasons for attending or not attending and their success, are factors often forgotten in an analysis between F2F tutorial attendance and student success.
- x. The majority of F2F tutors are not markers.
- xi. Contact between academic departments and F2F tutors are often sporadic.
- xii. In 2010 changes in the processes regarding the appointment of tutors, necessitated by the responsibility to ensure legal and policy compliance, had a considerable negative impact on the time it took to appoint tutors.
- xiii. Training of tutors by academic departments and contact between tutors and academics departments is mostly infrequent and sporadic.
- xiv. Tutors mostly don't receive clear guidance from academic departments what to focus on and at which stage of students' learning they should provide what type of guidance. Most tutors

do not receive tutor manuals developed by the courseware development teams. Most tutors are currently not involved in curriculum and learning development.

- xv. The specific roles of academic departments, TSDL, Finance, HR and the regional centres regarding tutorial services can be better understood and clarified.
- xvi. The programme does not cater for small clusters of students and isolated students in rural locations and small towns.
- xvii. DCCAD offers a range of F2F and Telematic counselling, study skills, academic literacy, etc services to students. Most of its services are based in the different regional hubs.
- xviii. Though the TSDL and the DCCAD offer a lot of the academic, affective and administrative support to students, there are also other role-players in the student support domain such as the academics, the Library, ICT, the SRC, DSAR, CCM, DSAA and others. Often the different role-players are not aware of the exact scope and content of the support rendered by the different role-players.
- xix. Over and above the above initiatives, there are also invaluable student support rendered by academics (individually and in departments, schools/colleges), Student Affairs through the office of the Dean of Students (including Student Development Support Services, ARCSWiD, and Student Financial Support Services).

4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Unisa can truly be proud of how student support has evolved over the years. The success of many students can be ascribed to the passion, commitment and care of a range of departments and individuals at Unisa. Student support at Unisa in its current state is the result of the hard work, passion, vision and commitment of a number of individuals who often worked against all odds. For many years up to the present, the regional centres played an invaluable part in “taking the distance out of distance education”.

Open distance learning (ODL) necessitates a specific understanding of student support as integral to effective teaching and learning design and delivery as well as integrated and coordinated institutional strategies and interventions. In becoming a fully-fledged ODL institution, Unisa will not only have to critically evaluate our critical student support strategies, structures and interventions, but also re-imagine student support in line with the challenges students face and will face in the 21st century.

Therefore, the student support we currently offer can be improved, better coordinated and structured, made more effective, increase in its quality, and have a greater impact on more students.

This proposals address specific gaps and shortcomings in offering student support at Unisa such as

- i. Increasing the effectiveness, appropriateness, quality and reach of current student support initiatives. Though there is evidence that the student support Unisa offers has a positive impact on student success, there is also evidence that greater effectiveness and systemic support and alignment may increase the impact on student success.
- ii. Much of the student support Unisa currently offers are bound to specific geographical locations and groups of students. This leaves a significant number of students *outside* of our current reach. Unisa can use a range of existing technologies much more effectively to reach more students.
- iii. At present most student support at Unisa is offered with the aim of addressing general needs. Should Unisa design and deliver student support focused on specific student groups (eg students at-risk) or at specific periods of the student journey (eg the first three weeks after registration and the two final weeks before the examinations), the impact of such initiatives may be far greater.
- iv. Current student support initiatives can be better coordinated, integrated and systemised.

5 OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSALS

5.1 KEY ASSUMPTIONS AND PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THIS PROPOSAL

- i. Not all students *require* the same type of support (academic, non-academic and administrative) throughout the whole of the semester, or at all.
- ii. Not all students *want* the same type of support (academic, non-academic and administrative) throughout the whole of the semester, or at all.
- iii. Not all students who *need* the same type of support (academic, non-academic and administrative) recognise or acknowledge this.
- iv. Unisa commits itself to provide all students with well-integrated systems and effective systemic support.
- v. *Any* student should have access to reliable and effective support *when* they need academic and non-academic support and/or advice.

- vi. Unisa proactively identifies students' potential and risk and provides appropriate support for students to develop their potential and to address their risks through well-designed and appropriate interventions based on a careful segmentation of students' potential and risk-profiles.
- vii. Self-assessment of potential and risk is a crucial part of increasing the self-efficacy of students and ensuring that students are aware of their potential for being successful and/or risk of failure.
- viii. Students' needs for support differ according to different variables such as gender, age, number of previous registrations, discipline, geographical location, access to technologies, semester or year modules, social and cultural diversity, etc. The Conceptual model for understanding and predicting student success (approved by Unisa Senate, 2 June 2010) provides a detailed overview of the different variables on student, institutional and broader societal levels.
- ix. Student support (academic and non-academic support) does not need to be face-to-face. There is a range of technologies available which allows student support at Unisa to take advantage of synchronous and asynchronous forms, which, if used appropriately and effectively, may form part and parcel of a total student support strategy.
- x. Student support contains both academic *and* non-academic elements and is delivered in an integrated and well-coordinated way by different stakeholders, internally and externally (such as industry, etc).

5.2 A BROAD OVERVIEW OF THREE TYPES OF STUDENT SUPPORT

Student support at Unisa is in service of students as whole persons and contributes to our students resembling Unisa's statement on graduateness as contained in the Unisa Curriculum Policy (2010:13-14):

Unisa graduates

- (i) are independent, resilient, responsible and caring citizens who are able to fulfil and serve in multiple roles in their immediate and future local, national and global communities
- (ii) have a critical understanding of their location on the African continent with its histories, challenges and potential in relation to globally diverse contexts
- (iii) are able to critically analyse and evaluate the credibility and usefulness of information and data from multiple sources in a globalised world with its ever increasing information and data flows and competing worldviews

- (iv) know how to apply their discipline-specific knowledges competently, ethically and creatively to solve real-life problems
- (v) are critically aware of their own learning and developmental needs and future potential

Student support is differentiated by distinct but possible overlapping foci:

5.2.1 ACADEMIC (COGNITIVE) SUPPORT

Academic (cognitive support) is wide-ranging and include “content”-related and “non-content” related student support with the aim of enhancing the cognitive dimension of the learning experience. Academic support is (and should be) integrated into the course design of the learning materials and resources, making effective use of multimedia (myUnisa, radio, TV, DVD, podcasts, VLEs, satellite and video conferencing) and is provided by a range of stakeholders such as academics, tutors(F2F and E), and markers. Academic support includes reflective components through well-designed activities in course materials, well-designed formative and summative assignment, and feedback on formative and summative assessments. All intended skills planned for in the core curriculum (such as psychomotoric skills, vocational skills, etc) and supportive reading and comprehension skills, and study skills form an integral part of academic student support.

Academic support is *mostly* rendered after registration up to the release of the examination marks.

5.2.2. AFFECTIVE (NON-ACADEMIC) SUPPORT

Affective (also includes social elements) student support focus on the impact students’ life-worlds (environmental, inter and intra-personal) have on student success and retention. Though affective support should be an integral part of all student support offered by any stakeholder, affective student support often requires specialised interventions by trained staff. Affective student support provides pastoral care and guidance to students and is based on three distinct phases – prior to registration, after registration and post-graduation (as suggested in the Conceptual Model for Student Support approved by Senate, 2 June 2010). Affective support encompasses holistically the whole student during the whole study experience (the student walk). Affective student support should also take the form of well-planned automated intelligent

SMS. Affective support includes a reflective component such as counselling, various change strategies, etc and different change strategies involving social support, financial support, etc.

- i. *PRIOR TO REGISTRATION*: In this period, affective support includes different interventions and communication strategies through marketing, career advice and guidance, study skills, time and task management skills, building self-efficacy, pastoral guidance. These interventions are provided by CCM, DCCAD, regional facilities, Student Affairs: Office of the Dean of students, etc.
- ii. *AFTER REGISTRATION*: *After* registration affective support is provided through continued interventions and services rendered by a range of institutional stakeholders like DCCAD, Tutors (F2F and E) and E-Mentors, regional facilities, Student Affairs: Office of the Dean of students, and a range of other internal and external stakeholders, etc. After registration students often experience tension between academic and non-academic elements of their student journey. Affective support during this period has as aim to build self-efficacy and to increase their loci of control. During this period it is crucial for students to get a sense of belonging to the institution, the discipline, student peer groups, etc.
- iii. *AFTER GRADUATION*: It is important that students' success is celebrated and appreciated. Alumni should remain involved, albeit differently, in developments in the institution and fields of study. Should alumni be invited to become markers, F2F or E-tutors, or E-mentors this may increase not only the effectiveness of student support in general, but also contribute to alumni's sense of belonging.

5.2.3 ADMINISTRATIVE (NON-ACADEMIC) SUPPORT (INCLUDES TECHNICAL SUPPORT)

International and research at Unisa indicates that non-academic factors often outweigh academic factors in their impact on student success and retention. Often these factors are outside the loci of control of students and they depend on the effectiveness and efficiency of institutional systems, procedures and processes. Without well-staffed, trained and committed personnel, student support at Unisa will be less effective.

A student support strategy as proposed in this document necessitates that staff and systems in the Unisa Call Centre (UCC), Despatch, Directorate of Student Administration and Assessment (DSAA), and other stakeholders buy into the necessity of administrative support in ODL.

The UCC delivers a one-stop service to the broad prospective and registered student base. There may be a need for dedicated departmental hotlines, e-mail addresses and procedures which can be activated at specific periods in a semester and for use by selected staff in order to fast-track student support to identified at-risk students. Tutors (F2F and E) and E-Mentors will deal with special and most probably urgent needs and would need to have access to dedicated staff to timeously solve at-risk students' problems. These departmental hotlines, e-mail addresses and procedures will not be available to students themselves but only be available to the selected group of E-Tutors/E-Mentors who will liaise between students and the institution.

As Unisa moves increasingly towards the effective and appropriate use of a range of technologies, Unisa will be required to render technical support to students.

6 PROPOSITION 1: INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND QUALITY OF CURRENT STUDENT SUPPORT INITIATIVES

As stated in the *Problem Statement (Point 4)* there is a lot that Unisa can be proud of in the portfolio of student support services. The following specific recommendations do not deny the excellent work and commitment by many individuals, groups and role-players. The rationale for the recommendations is that we can improve the effectiveness, the alignment, the scope and the quality of current student support initiatives.



Please take note that these recommendations, although targeted at specific groups of students at specific times of their learning journeys, is not attempted to exclude any student from receiving the support needed. The E-Tutor/E-Mentor project (Proposition 2) is aimed to become a standard option for all students from 2013.

Recommendation 6 (a)

With so many stakeholders providing a wide range of cognitive, affective and administrative student support to a diversity of students at different times of their learning journeys, the

possibility of duplication, overlaps, confusion, contestation, etc is huge. In order to prevent this from happening it is crucial to get an overview of what is offered by whom, when, the rationale for the offering and evidence regarding the students the intervention or strategy has reached, impact, feedback and future plans.

It is therefore recommended that a template/questionnaire be designed and sent to all stakeholders at Unisa to provide input in current student support offerings (cognitive, affective and administrative). The DSPQA to be involved in this initiative.

Who: The ODL coordinator to launch this initiative before March 2011

By when: Report back to the STLSC of June 2011.

Recommendation 6 (b)

Based on the compiled report (as outcome of Recommendation 6(a)), overlaps and gaps are identified by a smaller task team convened by the ODL coordinator. The team to include representatives of all relevant key stakeholders.

Who: The ODL coordinator to convene the team after June 2011

By when: Report back to the STLSC by October 2011.

6.1 F2F TUTORIALS AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS

F2F tutorial services is an integral part of the cognitive (and often the affective) dimension of student support. The scope, effectiveness, reach and quality of F2F tutorials can be improved based on a number of different reasons such as:

- i. The focus of F2F tutorials is on HEQF 5 and 6 modules, with some HEQF 7 and postgraduate modules offered, depending on academic departmental requests, a minimum number of students per geographical location and on the availability of a tutor in that specific region.
- ii. The majority of tutorials are offered for HEQF5 modules

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- iii. Students often opt to attend only some of the tutorials based on specific needs and interests
- iv. The specific focus and interrelationship between F2F tutorials and groups discussions offered by lecturers can be improved.

The correlation between attending F2F tutorials and student success differs between regions, modules, tutors and groups of students. While there is a clear direct correlation between attending F2F tutorials and student success in some regions, modules, etc; the correlation cannot be generalised.

There are currently a number of factors that frustrate more effective F2F tutorial support such as

- i. In 2010, the turnaround time for the appointment of tutors became longer due to changes in processes and procedures necessitated to ensure legal and policy compliance.
- ii. The contact and coordination between tutors and academic departments, and between Peer Collaborative Learners (PCLs) and Tutors can be expanded and improved.
- iii. Training of tutors in the academic content of their responsibility and pedagogy can be expanded and improved.
- iv. The position (currently mostly junior lecturers), role and sustainability of the Academic Department Tutor Coordinators (ADTCs) needs to be explored and made more effective.
- v. The systems and tools used in the monitoring and *formative* evaluation of F2F tutorial services differ between regions.
- vi. The systems for capturing and reporting attendance of tutorials can be improved.
- vii. Tutors are not currently involved in the development of curricula and course materials as prescribed by the Framework for a team Approach in the development of curricula and courseware (FTA).
- viii. Tutors don't get *academic* tutor manuals to provide them with guidance regarding specific foci.
- ix. There is resistance among some academics to use F2F tutors as markers due to a variety of reasons, many of which may be well-founded. Not all tutors want to be markers and not all markers want to be tutors. There is however a possible rich source for support to

academics if tutor-markers can be trained properly and systems to support them be formalized.

- x. Tutors have difficulty accessing *myUnisa* and their roles in the *myUnisa* environment are not clear.
- xi. Sustainable and affordable access to the internet is of concern for many tutors and impact negatively on their ability to source information.
- xii. Guidelines need to be developed regarding the coordination and integration between the different services provided by different stakeholders.

Recommendation 6.1

A smaller task team is convened by the ODL Coordinator to urgently address the issues regarding the appointment of academic tutors and tutor-markers and their linking to Unisa systems, e-mail and Unisa networks.

Who: The ODL coordinator to launch this initiative as soon as possible

By when: Report back to the STLSC of June 2011.

Recommendation 6.2

A task team is convened by the ODL Coordinator involving all key stakeholders who impact on the success, effectiveness and quality of F2F tutorials, group discussions and practicals to

- Investigate factors that frustrate the effectiveness and quality of F2F tuition, group discussions and practicals and
- Table specific recommendations for implementation in 2012.

Who: The ODL coordinator to launch this initiative as soon as possible

By when: Report back to the STLSC of June 2011 for implementation in 2012

6.2 VIDEO CONFERENCING AND SATELLITE BROADCASTING

At the meeting of Senate on 2 June, Senate accepted a number of recommendations regarding Video Conferencing (VC) and Satellite Broadcasting (SB) at Unisa. A small task team was formed

to implement the recommendations of Senate as well as to develop specific guidelines for academics to increase the effectiveness and quality of VC and SB provision at Unisa. The team is also investigating increasing the training of academics in the more effective use of VC and SB.

VC and SB fulfill primarily a cognitive support function in student support but the affective dimension of interaction with the lecturer and other students should not be underestimated.

Recommendation 6.2.1

The implementation of the recommendations will be monitored by ICT and a report on the success of the implementation and possible changes.

Who: The ODL coordinator to chair the smaller team comprising of representatives from ICT, DCLD, and Photography, Sound and Video.

By when: Report back to the STLSC of June 2011 and where applicable, table recommendations for improvement.

6.3 UNISA CALL CENTRE

The Unisa Call Centre (UCC) fulfills a crucial role in linking students with cognitive, affective and/or administrative support. A less-than-optimum functioning UCC may render much of an attempt to increase the general effectiveness and quality of student support provision less effective. A well-equipped, trained and committed UCC is non-negotiable for rendering effective support at Unisa.

Recommendation 6.3.1

There are currently a number of initiatives underway to increase the effectiveness and quality of services offered by the UCC. The Deputy Registrar to report back to the STLSC and table recommendations for improvement.

Who: The Deputy Registrar

By when: STLSC June 2011

6.4 ODL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL UNISA EMPLOYEES

If all of Unisa's employees had a shared and well-informed understanding of ODL, the rendering of effective and quality student support in all three its dimensions (cognitive, affective and administrative) may be easier. ODL encompasses much more than student support, but student support is an integral part of effective and quality ODL.

Recommendation 6.4.1

The ODL Coordinator has been tasked by the Senate meeting of 2 June to finalise an ODL training programme in ODL for all Unisa. The ODL Coordinator, in collaboration with HR, to submit a draft framework for the implementation of ODL training for all Unisa employees at the STLSC meeting of **May 2011** for roll-out in the second semester of 2011.

Who: The ODL coordinator in consultation with HR

By when: Report back to the STLSC of May 2011 for roll-out in the second semester of 2011.

6.5 VLE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The effective and appropriate use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) is central to the implementation of ODL at Unisa. VLEs can be effectively used in the rendering of cognitive, administrative and affective student support. The DCLD has been tasked by the Senate meeting of 2 June to develop a mandatory training for all academic staff in the effective and appropriate use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) by the end of 2010.

Recommendation 6.5.1

The curriculum and training schedule should be tabled by the DCLD at the STLSC meeting of **May 2011** for roll-out in the second semester of 2011.

Who: Dr Azwy Tshivhase (DCLD)

By when: Report back to the STLSC meeting of **May 2011** for roll-out in the second semester of 2011.

6.6 FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Assessment, formative and summative, forms not only the backbone of cognitive student support, but also affective (pastoral) student support by providing students with encouragement, general advice and corrective guidance. At present the quality of feedback on formative assessment is often highly suspect. In many cases the general feedback sent to students after an assignment is so general as to have very little potential to provide guidance to students at risk. Many students often only receive their assignments back with the final mark with very little (if any) comments, corrective guidance and advice on specific issues.

International research has indicated that better feedback, both general and personal, has a huge impact on improving student retention and success.

Recommendations 6.6.1 and 6.6.2 deal with feedback on assignments and Recommendation 6.6.3 deal with feedback after examinations.

Recommendation 6.6.1

The DSAA is tasked to compile an audit on the feedback provided to students on assignments. T Progress report at the STLSC of **June 2011** and recommendations at to be tabled at the STLSC of **August 2011**.

Who: Deputy Registrar and DSAA

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011/August 2011**.

Recommendation 6.6.2

Colleges to implement specific actions to increase the feedback students receive on their formative assessments in response to the audit done by the Deputy Registrar and DSAA.

Colleges to consult where possible with the DCLD, DCCAD and other role players and to report back to the STLSC of **October 2011** on strategies to increase the quality of feedback on formative assessments in the colleges.

Who: Executive Deans

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **October 2011**.

Recommendation 6.6.3

Colleges to ensure that generic formative feedback after examinations is provided on *myUnisa* a week after the results are made public. The feedback can be in the form of a podcast or a blog on myUnisa in which specific feedback regarding general mistakes students made during the examination is provided.

Who: Executive Deans

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

Recommendation 6.6.4

The Deputy Registrar, DSAA, the ODL Convenor, representatives from ICT and academic departments convene a small task team under the auspices of DSAA to investigate the possibilities and implications of providing students who have failed modules with personal or more directive feedback immediately after the results are made known.

Who: Deputy Registrar and DSAA

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

Recommendation 6.6.5

Official University postponement and/or cancellation of due dates for assignments on the academic calendar disturbs the tuition process in academic departments to such an extent that quality is sacrificed and academic success put at risk. The Deputy Registrar and DSAA is tasked to do an audit on the origins/reasons for these actions and to then establish possible strategies to avoid it and report back to the STLSC of June 2011.

Who: Deputy Registrar and DSAA

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

6.7 THE REGIONS

The regions fulfill an invaluable role in the implementation of ODL in all three dimensions of student support (cognitive, affective and administrative). Services rendered at the regional centers can be more effective and possibly, different from what they are. At present the regions' position in the bigger ODL and organisation picture is in flux. There is not a clear understanding amongst various key role-players, at the corporate level as well as in the regions, of the role and responsibilities of regions in support of the vision and strategies of Unisa. Services rendered in regions are currently hampered due to uncertainty regarding the impact of ODL and the functioning of regions, the regional model to be adopted, and the delay in finalizing the structures and filling vacant positions. The relationships between regions and some corporate office are not optimal and regional staff members are also not always involved / consulted in the development of policy that impact on the regions. Communication and reporting lines within the regions are creating uncertainty / conflict. Norms for the determination of optimal staff levels are furthermore outdated and require review.

In addition, policies, strategies and initiatives adopted at corporate level are not always consulted with regions and are implemented without fully considering the capacity of regions to provide required support. Currently, no audits / evaluations of services in the Regions are undertaken. Internal Audit does not have capacity whilst visits from other units / departments focus mainly on capacity development and crisis management.

Recommendation 6.7.1

The ODL Coordinator is tasked by establishing a team of representatives from the regions and other stakeholders (such as Organisation Development) to explore ways in which ODL impacts on the regional functions, interrelationships and interdependencies and structures. The Executive Director: Student Support and the ODL Coordinator to table a report to the STLSC of **June 2011**.

Who: The Executive Director: Student Support and the ODL Coordinator

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

6.8 INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED FUNCTIONS, SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES

Without integrated and coordinated functions, systems and procedures, ODL, and more specifically, student support at Unisa will remain fragmented, frustrated and ineffective. By the middle of 2011 Unisa should have a much clearer understanding of the implications of ODL and have clear guidelines and strategies for the integration and coordination of functions, systems and procedures. While ICT was part of all the task teams, there is a need for a specific working group to think-through the recommendations of the different groups.

Recommendation 6.8.1

The ODL Coordinator to convene a task team (specifically including the regions) by the end of September 2010 to start exploring the integration of different systems and procedures. The task team should identify appropriate information, processes and procedures for appropriate systems to capture which can be used for targeting specific students for interventions and to measure the effect of interventions. A report with clear recommendations to be tabled at the STLSC meeting of **June 2011**.

Who: ODL Coordinator

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

6.9 ODL RESEARCH

There are a number of stakeholders in the domain of ODL research at Unisa such as individual academics, departmental ODL research teams, the IODL, the Institutional Research (IR) department in DISA, and various research committees, etc. There is an urgent need for evidence-based teaching and student support strategies at Unisa. Unisa needs to know whether our current cognitive, affective, and administrative student support strategies are having the intended impact and how we can improve on our current initiatives and also launch new innovative approaches in student support.

Recommendation 6.9.1

The IODL convenes a meeting of all role-players in ODL research at Unisa to clarify the distinct foci and functions of ODL research and to determine specific ODL research foci for 2011-2012. The IODL to report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**.

Who: Prof Braimoh, IODL

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

6.10 DCCAD

The DCCAD provide an essential range of services to students such as counseling, academic literacy, life skills, study skills, examination preparation workshops, etc. These services are rendered through counselors, Peer Collaborative Learners (PCLs) and administrative staff in service of the DCCAD.

Recommendation 6.10.1

The DCCAD audits its own services and provide the STLSC of **June 2011** with specific strategies and interventions to increase the effectiveness and quality of student support services by the DCCAD. The recommendations should be formulated through a consultative process involving all relevant stakeholders *before* submission.

Who: Dr Van Schoor

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

6.11 LIBRARY

The Library and Information Services are an integral part of teaching and learning and fulfill a specific student support function within the broader spectrum of cognitive support. Student access to information services and resources (in all formats), information and computer literacy training are key to ensure optimization of these services and to enhance student support at Unisa. The recommendations should be formulated through a consultative process involving all

relevant stakeholders before submission and aligned with international standards for Open Distance Library Services.

Recommendation 6.11.1

The Library undertakes a self review on its own services and resources, benchmark the services against other ODL library services and provides the STLSC of June 2011 with specific strategies and interventions to increase the effectiveness and quality of services and resources rendered by the Library. The recommendations should be formulated through a consultative process involving all relevant stakeholders before submission and aligned with international standards for Open Distance Library Services.

Who: Executive Director: Library

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

6.12 CCM

Corporate Communication and Marketing play a crucial role in providing correct and timeous information to students using a variety of means. In 2010 a very comprehensive student communication plan was approved by the STLSC and the Unisa calendars were simplified. The impact of these changes should be investigated to identify gaps in cycle of constant innovation and improvement.

Recommendation 6.12.1

CCM audits its own services and provides the STLSC of June 2011 with specific strategies and interventions to increase the effectiveness and quality of communication to students from pre-registration, during the academic year and after graduation.

Such audit should include the role of and services rendered by Communication and Marketing Officers in the Regions as well as College Marketers.

Who: Executive Director: CCM

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

6.13 ICT

ICT provides systemic support to maintain the operationality of Unisa's ICT systems. As Unisa moves increasingly into using a range of technologies appropriately and effectively, students and staff will require very specific support, often outside office hours.

Recommendation 6.13.1

All working groups and task teams to include representatives from ICT to advise and to be informed of requirements, etc.

Recommendation 6.13.2

ICT audits its own services and provides the STLSC of June 2011 with specific strategies and interventions to increase the effectiveness and quality of communication to students from pre-registration, during the academic year and after graduation.

Who: Executive Director: ICT

By when: Initial report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

Recommendation 6.13.2

ICT to convene a smaller task team to investigate increasing the scope and possibilities of the technical support to staff *and* students to propose to the STLSC of June 2011 definite recommendations to ensure that staff and students will receive the technical support they need. The smaller task team to consist of all relevant stakeholders such as UCC, academic departments, relevant regional representatives, etc.

Who: Executive Director: ICT

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

6.14 MYUNISA

MyUnisa is the official VLE for all teaching and learning activities and initiatives at Unisa. The two main stakeholders, namely staff and students' input regarding the usability, effectiveness, etc of *myUnisa* is crucial. In the past there were several problems regarding students' passwords, myLife e-mail accounts, etc. There are also some concerns about how often students use their *myLife* e-mail accounts. Unisa needs to establish a number of trustworthy ways to communicate with students and to facilitate teaching, learning and student support.

Recommendation 6.14.1

ICT, and specifically the *myUnisa* team audits its own services, procedures and processes in order to increase its effectiveness and quality of the services it renders to staff and students. ICT to submit a report to the STLSC of June 2011.

Who: Executive Director: ICT

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

Recommendation 6.14.2

ICT, and specifically the *myUnisa* team takes note of all the recommendations of the ODL Task teams and explore ways to integrate the various applicable recommendations to increase the effectiveness and quality of teaching and learning on *myUnisa*.

Who: Executive Director: ICT

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

Recommendation 6.14.3

ICT, and specifically the *myUnisa* team establishes clear policies, guidelines, systems, processes and procedures to ensure access to *myUnisa* and appropriate Unisa networks to all outside providers such as tutors, E-Tutors, E-Mentors, markers, tutor-markers, etc.

Who: Executive Director: ICT

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

6.15 DISA

As the work of the different task teams unfold, there emerges, ODL Task team 6 under the auspices of the Executive Director: DISA develops an integrated and comprehensive framework for overseeing student retention and success at Unisa.

Recommendation 6.15.1

DISA to table a framework and specific recommendations to implement coordinated strategies to harvest and act on intelligent data for increasing student retention and success.

Who: Executive Director: DISA

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

6.16 STUDENT AFFAIRS: OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

The Office of the Dean of students provides an integral component of a holistic approach to student support at Unisa. The office's services include addressing specific needs of specific groups of students such as students with financial constraints, disabilities, etc.

Recommendation 6.16.1

The Office of the Dean of students audits its own services and provides the **STLSC of June 2011** with a specific framework that will include strategies and suggested interventions of its own portfolio that will increase the effectiveness of its scope of services provided to students, taking the diverse needs of Unisa's students into account.

Who: Mr Convy Baloyi, Dean of Students

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **July 2011**

6.17 DSAA/DSAR

Administrative support forms an integral part of a holistic and integrated student support strategy.

Recommendation 6.17.1

The Department of Student Assessment and Administration (DSAA) and the Department of Student Admission and Registration (DSAR) audits its own services and provides the **STLSC of June 2011** with a specific framework that will include strategies and suggested interventions of its own portfolio that will increase the effectiveness of its scope of services provided to students, taking the diverse needs of Unisa's students into account.

Who: Deputy Registrar

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

6.18 SUPERVISION AND MENTORING OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

The effectiveness of supervision and mentoring of postgraduate students play a crucial part in their success. Though it is definitely not the only factor in postgraduate students' success, there may be a number of possibilities to increase the effectiveness of supervision and mentoring of postgraduate students.

Recommendation 6.18.1

The Unisa School of Graduate Studies audits its own services and provides the **STLSC of July 2011** with a specific framework that will include strategies and suggested interventions of its own portfolio that will increase the effectiveness of its scope of services provided to students, taking the diverse needs of Unisa's students into account.

Who: Executive Director: Unisa School of Graduateness

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **July 2011**

6.19 INTEGRATING TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT

Colleges are responsible for the design, development, monitoring of teaching phase, and assessment and evaluation of ODL courses (with the approval documents, Form 1, 2 and 3 forming the design plans for the qualification, its structure, and the modules design).

Within these design documents the criteria for successful and efficient delivery should be clearly stated, including the need and types of different learning environments for success, such as student support efforts within the modules, the required work-integrated or laboratory-type experiences, or supervision required by experts to model good practices in the field."

It is essential that all forms of student support (cognitive, affective and administrative) be integrated into the planning of the teaching and learning experience.

Recommendation 6.19.1

The Academic Planner to advise regarding the appropriate format and content of the document which will encompass not only the curriculum and assessment plans, but also include the modes of delivery, the different student support initiatives, and affective and administrative support students will need in the module.

Who: Executive Director: Academic Planner

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

Recommendation 6.19.2

DSAR to keep a repository of these documents and ensure an annual updating of these forms (not the approved curriculum part), but the assessment plans and detailed plans of the cognitive, affective and administrative support envisaged for the following academic year.

Who: Deputy Registrar and DSAR

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

Recommendation 6.19.3

Colleges to audit the student support in their current modules (cognitive, affective and administrative) involving a range of appropriate stakeholders such as TSDL, ICT, DCLD, DSAA, DSAR, DCCAD and the Library where necessary.

Who: Executive Deans

By when: Report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**

7 PROPOSITION 2: TOWARDS E-TUTORING/E-MENTORING¹

The main thrust of this proposition is

- i. to offer academic (cognitive), affective (non-academic), and administrative (systemic) support
- ii. to targeted students in specific modules
- iii. using a range of appropriate technologies
- iv. in addition to current student support initiatives.

At present a lot of the student support at Unisa is based on a reactive one-size-fits-all approach based on face-to-face (F2F) contact. Unfortunately a huge percentage of students are currently excluded from

¹ The terms E-Tutors and E-Mentors are used for persons will provide support (academic and/or affective) student support using mobile technologies and where possible synchronous and asynchronous web-based technologies. Some authors prefer to use M-Tutors or Teletutors for tutors using mobile technologies and E-Tutors who use web-based technologies. In the document E-Tutors and E-Mentors refer to the use of all available technologies.

F2F tutorial support due to the fact that these services are rendered in specific locations often out of reach to many students.

This proposal does not want to replace what is already in place, whether it is F2F tutoring or peer collaborative learning (PCL), etc. We propose a *distinct form of support*, namely the **E-Tutor** and the **E-Mentor** which will provide academic and/or non-academic support and liaise between students and various stakeholders to ensure systemic support. This proposal wants to target specific groups of students at specific periods of a semester with specific interventions in a proactive way delivered by a specific person, namely the E-Tutor **OR** E-Mentor. These interventions will be synchronously or asynchronously delivered via telephone, e-mail and a range of other technologies. These E-Tutors and/or E-Mentors will not be bound to working with students in the same geographical location as they themselves are. The current proposal includes references to F2F Tutors to ensure integration and where possible, to expand the current understanding and job descriptions of F2F tutors.

7.1 KEY ELEMENTS OF THIS PROPOSAL

1. At-risk students are identified at application/pre-registration/registration according to general academic, discipline specific and non-academic risk factors.
2. Each of the identified students will have access to *either* an E-Tutor *or*, where persons with academic expertise cannot be found or where students' need for affective student support may warrant, these students will be allocated to an E-Mentor.
3. A certain number of E-Tutors (and E-Mentors) are appointed in identified modules *prior* to registration based on estimations of the number of at-risk students who will register in the following year. The exact ratio between E-Tutor: student and E-Mentor: student stills need to be determined. The ratio will depend on the exact expectations of the E-Tutor/E-Mentor in the context of the module and profile of students.
4. E-Tutors and E-Mentors have specific skill-sets based on the HEQF level of allocated students, discipline and specific roles (whether tutoring or mentoring).
5. Both E-Tutors and E-Mentors are trained by Unisa for their specific roles.
6. E-Tutors and E-Mentors fulfill specific and detailed roles during the semester.
7. E-Tutors and E-Mentors act as first point of contact for identified at-risk students.
8. E-Tutors and E-Mentors have internet connectivity and access to selected Unisa sites, eg the Student Tracking System Database, selected items on the Student System, etc.

9. An E-Tutor/Mentor Coordinator is appointed *within academic departments* to oversee the appointment, selection, monitoring and evaluation of E-Tutors and E-Mentors.

7.2 KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPOSITION

Effective, proactive and targeted E-student support is

1. **personalised** as far as possible to address specific and changing needs of students;
2. **holistic and integrates** different aspects of students' learning and life-experiences;
3. **proactive and responsive**, individually and/or collectively, automated and non-automated;
4. **targeted** at specific groups of students who share specific needs, whether self-identified or identified by Unisa;
5. **quality assured**, evidence-based and outcomes- focused;
6. **appropriate** to the level and needs of students and **recognises different stages** of a student's development;
7. **enhanced and supported** by the effective, affordable and appropriate use of a range of technologies.

7.3 STUDENT RISK IDENTIFICATION AND SEGMENTATION

Student-risk can be self-reported/self-identified (for example where students register for F2F tutorials or contact lecturers and/or tutors and /or counselling services). The institution also has a responsibility to identify at-risk students, whether, for example, at registration, after registration, after the first assignment or after the examination.

There are furthermore different ways to *segment* students' risk and whether their risk consists of academic or non-academic (affective) factors or a combination of those. It is also important to identify whether students are *aware* of their risk and whether students are prepared for its implications or unaware and unprepared. In the event where students register for F2F tutorial programmes and/or contact their lecturers/tutors/counselling services, it can be assumed that students have become aware of their risk and take action to address the risk. In the event where the institution identifies and segments students at-risk, the institution can use specific indicators (and combinations) of academic and non-academic risk factors. Indicators of *academic risk* include factors such as M-scores, proficiency in the language of tuition, etc. Non-academic factors include affective and administrative factors ranging from life-circumstances, number of dependents, financial security, health, full-time or part-time, etc.

It is also crucial for the institution to become aware of institutional risk factors, such as the postponement of assignment dates, out-of-stock items of study materials, etc. Institutional policies, procedures, structures and integration of intervention and strategies play an invaluable role in planning appropriate and effective student support.

At present it is very difficult (if not impossible) to have a clear picture of the causal inter-relations between different variables at different stages of the student walk due to the fact that Unisa neither has access to all the data, nor a proven statistical model which can determine the interdependencies of different variables at different stages of the student walk. There are a number of initiatives underway which will provide Unisa with more actionable data, eg. the student profiling instrument and the student tracking system. As Unisa develops systems and procedures to refine our understanding of the factors influencing student retention and success, we will in future be able to respond to specific groups of students who share a specific risk profile.

While this is in process, it is proposed that this proposal for E-Tutoring and E-Mentoring is piloted in a small number of modules where at-risk students will be identified using current available data and findings. These students will be allocated on registration to an E-Tutor or E-Mentor.

7.4 QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS OF E-TUTORS/E-MENTORS

E-TUTORS	E-MENTORS
<p>For first year modules, E-Tutors should have completed <u>at least</u> all the third-year level modules of the subject in question, and 20 modules in total.</p> <p>(Note: The alignment with the HEQF and other documents will still need to be established)</p> <p>A possible source for E-Tutors is teachers in secondary schools and lecturers at other higher education institutions and FET colleges.</p>	<p>For first year modules, E-Coaches should have completed <u>at least</u> 20 modules in any bachelor programme.</p> <p>A possible source for E-Mentors are alumni, community leaders, teachers in secondary schools irrespective of subject expertise and current DCCAD counsellors and student counsellors.</p>
<p>Have access to a networked computer at home (may be provided with a data allowance).</p>	<p>Have access to a networked computer at home (may be provided with a data allowance).</p>
<p>Have the following computer skills:</p>	<p>Have the following computer skills:</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uploading and downloading of files • Good electronic communication skills • Competent in the use of e-mails and searches on the internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uploading and downloading of files • Good electronic communication skills • Competent in the use of e-mails and searches on the internet
Commitment to undergo training	Commitment to undergo training
Sign a code of ethical conduct and confidentiality	Sign a code of ethical conduct and confidentiality
Show concern and care towards fellow students	Show concern and care towards fellow students
Sign a detailed job description with clear deliverables and monitoring and evaluation procedures.	Sign a detailed job description with clear deliverables and monitoring and evaluation procedures.
Renewal of contract is subject to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional need • Evaluation of impact of service on student success • Fulfilment of contract • Student and stakeholder feedback 	Renewal of contract is subject to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional need • Evaluation of impact of service on student success • Fulfilment of contract • Student and stakeholder feedback

7.5 THE POSITION OF THE E-TUTOR/E-MENTOR COORDINATOR

Currently academic departments draw up the requirements of tutors in the context of application, but the job descriptions (responsibilities) as tutors are drawn up by the TSDL. The Head: Facilitation of Learning, situated in the regions, in collaboration with the TSDL are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the tutors.

With regard to the E-Tutors the following is proposed:

1. The responsibility for, appointment and payment of, and the monitoring and evaluation of E-Tutors reside *in the academic department*.
2. An E-Tutor Coordinator is *located in the academic department*. The E-Tutor Coordinator is primarily an administrative position but with academic expertise in the field of the department (preferably an Honors Degree).

With regard to the E-Mentors the following is proposed:

1. The responsibility for, appointment and payment of, and the monitoring and evaluation of E-Mentors reside *with the DCCAD in close collaboration with the E-Tutor Coordinator in the pilot academic department* (in the case where there are both E-Tutors and E-Mentors).

Recommendation 7.5.1

The *principle* of offering E-Tutor and E-Mentor support to targeted students is accepted.

Recommendation 7.5.2

The ODL Coordinator convenes a smaller task team before the end of October 2010 to finalise the proposal for E-Tutors/E-Mentors in order to ensure that all applicable systems, procedures, policies and processes are in place for implementation in the second semester of 2011. This task team needs to establish, inter alia, what type of access these tutors will need, when, for how long, code of ethics, appointment procedures/processes/policies, etc.

This task team also has to develop guidelines, procedures if students want to opt out of the pilot and/or change E-Tutors/E-Mentors.

Who: ODL Coordinator

By when: Before the end of 2010 with regular feedback to the STLSC.

Recommendation 7.5.3

The offering of E-Tutoring and E-Mentoring is piloted in 3-5 modules during the **second semester of 2011**.

Recommendation 7.5.4

The STLSC is continuously updated on the progress of the project by the ODL Coordinator and a preliminary report on the success of the first pilot is submitted at the STLSC meeting in **September 2011**.

Recommendation 7.5.5

Depending on the integration of systems and procedures and the success of the first pilot of E-Tutoring/E-Mentoring, all departments will be encouraged to explore the benefits of implementing E-Tutors/E-Mentors in specific modules to specific targeted students by **July 2012**, and as a standard option to all students in **2013**.

8 PROPOSITION 3: TOWARDS INTERACTIVE COMPUTER MARKED (iCMA) SELF-ASSESSMENT

iCMA is a form of E-assessment using computers to generate immediate feedback and automatic marking without the direct involvement of human beings. The feedback received in iCMAs is immediate and therefore optimises the opportunity to provide students with feedback when they are most keen to take feedback seriously. Well-planned iCMAs are used in international higher education institutions to allow students to determine their potential and readiness to either enrol for a specific module or submit assignments or even sit for summative assessment. Students can furthermore access these iCMAs from any place where they have internet connectivity. The aim of an iCMA is mostly formative but can also be used for summative purposes.

iCMAs are used in the context of the Open University in modules where there are no minimum admission requirements. These iCMAs are therefore designed to allow students to determine their readiness to enrol for a particular module. These iCMAs are then designed to test students' prior knowledge, potential and readiness in a particular discipline or subject.

iCMAs can be posted on the open Unisa website to allow students to

- i. Determine their readiness and potential to enrol in higher education and more specifically ODL
- ii. Engage them to plot the time they will need to register for the modules they thought of registering for
- iii. Determine whether they are ready to enrol in a particular discipline
- iv. Determine whether they have the necessary background and competencies required in a specific module.

Recommendation 8.1

The DCCAD is tasked to develop an iCMA to allow students to determine their readiness to enroll in higher education and ODL in particular. The DCCAD can co-opt and collaborate with a range of stakeholders such as CCM (myChoice), ICT, DISA and the DCLD. The DCCAD to report back at the STLSC meeting of **June 2011**.

Recommendation 8.2

Colleges investigate the possibilities to develop in collaboration with appropriate stakeholders iCMAs for specific purposes prior to registration, or if appropriate, post registration. Executive Deans to report back to the STLSC of **June 2011**.

Recommendation 8.3

DISA explores the possibility to link these iCMAs to the Student Tracking System and ensure institutional responses where appropriate and necessary. Feedback submitted to the STLSC of **June 2011**.

9 PROPOSITION 4

Automated short messages have become part and parcel of communication between institutions (whether private or corporate) and their customers, clients or students. Other than the challenge of formulating an SMS coherently within the limitation of 160 characters and the cost (at present) is 22 cents per SMS, is the 'spam' character of many of the SMSs that is sent out. It has therefore become very important to include an "opt-out" option to all such services. Several departments and individual lecturers currently send automated SMSs to students at different stages of the learning journey, often without an option to opt out of receiving these texts. Another current draw-back is the fact that SMSs used by departments and individual lecturers are mostly one-way communication without the option that students can respond to SMSs or send a text to the institution as the need arises.

Carefully designed (content and timing) SMSs can greatly assist both the institution and students to communicate within the constraints of limited number of characters, cost and possible inconvenience.

Recommendation 9.1

A distinction is made between general administrative SMSs and teaching and motivational related SMSs. Unisa, as institution is responsible to send general SMS to all students

- i. Confirming registration and availability of study material on myUnisa and posting tracking numbers. For example: Welcome @ Unisa. Ur material has been posted to you, tracking number: 5736251. All ur study materials are available online on myUnisa, <http://www.unisa.ac.za> (156 characters with spaces)
- ii. Reminders of assignment dates
- iii. Reminder of availability of examination timetable

Individual lecturers may send out SMSs to provide specific guidance regarding workload, or motivational texts.

Recommendation 9.2

ICT is tasked to provide an estimation of costs if all students receive 5 SMSs per semester (confirmation of registration, reminders of two assignments and reminder of the availability of the examination timetable) to the STLSC of **October 2010**.

Recommendation 9.3

Students must have the option to opt out of receiving SMSs. ICT to develop procedures on how students' choice could be recorded and implemented. Report to the STLSC of **June 2011**.

Recommendation 9.4

Unisa explores and implements a system where students can send specific requests/feedback to the institution using SMSs. ICT is tasked to report back to the STLSC in **June 2011**.

10 AN OVERVIEW OF HOW THE THREE FOCI OF STUDENT SUPPORT UNFOLDS

Though E-Tutors and E-Mentors fulfil specific roles to specific groups of students, they are not the only role-players in providing student support at Unisa. The following table (**Table 2**) describes how different stakeholders fulfil the three different dimensions of student support, namely cognitive, affective and administrative:

Table 2: An overview of the role of different stakeholders in providing student support

	COGNITIVE (ACADEMIC) SUPPORT	AFFECTIVE SUPPORT	ADMINISTRATIVE (SYSTEMIC) SUPPORT
ACADEMICS	<p>Primary responsibility of academics: in providing cognitive support through well-designed learning resources, integrated assessment and optimal use of myUnisa. Podcasts, video and satellite conferencing.</p> <p>Primarily responsible to make optimum use of intelligent automated SMS system such as is provided by banks etc for customers. Enormously effective and requires no human intervention apart from designing the software.</p>	<p>Primarily responsible to make optimum use of intelligent automated SMS system such as is provided by banks etc for customers. Enormously effective and requires no human intervention apart from designing the software.</p>	<p>Refer students to appropriate departments for administrative support such as Despatch, DSAA, DSAR, etc.</p>

DCCAD	Enhancing academic performance by offering of workshops on study skills, reading, writing, etc.	Primary responsibility: Pre-registration counselling and advice. Specialised learning journey pastoral care	Correct and appropriate referrals and follow-up.
OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS	Addresses specific cognitive student support needs in specific groups of students such as students with disabilities.	Offers a range of services throughout the learning cycle such as financial services, life skills workshops, student leadership interventions and a full range of services for students with disabilities	Supports the main administrative support departments such as DSAA and DSAR through referrals, follow-up, etc.
ADMISSIONS AND REGISTRATIONS		Ensure that students reflect on the number of modules they take per semester; the correctness of contact detail and their access to a reliable postal address (see the next table for an example of how this may unfold).	Primary responsibility is to provide correct information, and to register students timeously and correctly.
DISA/STUDENT SUCCESS COORDINATING COMMITTEE		Institutional reflectivity.	Primary responsibility: tracking system; administration, analysis and reporting of pre-registration risk assessment surveys Actionable and intelligent information and analysis. Student Success Coordinating Committee: developing and ensuring compliance with processes and procedures to enhance student success and retention; monitoring trends and recommending changes to STLSC/Senate and other relevant committees.

<p>UNISA CALL CENTRE (UCC)</p>			<p>Available and correct information provision Appropriate referral to appropriate departments through well-trained consultants providing a courteous, professional telephonic service.</p>
<p>TUTORS (whether F2F or E) (The Tutor may also be a marker. I do however suspect that not all markers would like to be tutors and not all tutors may want to be markers. <i>The optimal solution would be for all tutors to have marking responsibilities</i>).</p>	<p>Primary responsibility of E-Tutors is to provide ICT enabled cognitive support to allocated students OR F2F tutors who provide cognitive support to students registered at regional centres for such support.</p> <p>NB – where E-Tutors and F2F tutors are appointed, they are the first point of contact for students, whether for academic or non academic support.</p>	<p>E-Tutors in the scope of this project to ALSO provide non-academic ICT enabled support to allocated students by structured contact, interventions and referrals. E-Tutors are linked to a certain level of the tracking system to be able to respond to data, and to contribute to more complete data on individual students. F2F tutors are encouraged, and empowered to increasingly adopt their students also in a pastoral care capacity. F2F tutors are linked to a certain level of the tracking system to be able to respond to data, and to contribute to more complete data on individual students.</p>	<p>Tutors (F2F and E) contribute information to individual student data base which provide course development teams and lecturers with feedback on student questions/progress/challenges</p>

<p>E-MENTORS</p>	<p>E-Mentors should be well trained to recognize what they can deal with and what needs to be referred to academic departments, DCCAD, etc.</p>	<p>Through regular contact with students, the E-Mentor accompanies students in their learning and life journeys. Special emphasis is placed on increasing students' loci of control, self-efficacy, reflexivity. No face-to-face contact, only using telephonic and e-mail contact.</p> <p>E-Mentors should be well trained to recognize what they can deal with and what needs to be referred to academic departments, DCCAD, Office of the Dean of students, etc.</p>	<p>Though the UCC has the primary responsibility to provide correct information and to refer students' enquiries appropriately, E-Mentor may need departmental hotlines – whether academic or non-academic (DCCAD).</p>
<p>MARKERS/MODERATORS</p>	<p>Primary responsibility is to provide detailed, and where at all possible personalised feedback on formative and summative assessment.</p> <p>Moderators and heads of departments ensure alignment of assessment with Form 3.</p>	<p>Feedback on assessment should always be formative, humane and caring. Markers are linked to student data base to update students' individual records with appropriate remarks/feedback.</p>	<p>Refer to specialised attention when necessary to DCCAD.</p>

PEER HELPERS	Provide students with role models – “I’ve made it, so you can too”.	Assist peers with reflecting on choices.	Peer helpers have been through the system a number of times and may provide students with “unofficial” (“street wise”) knowledges and coping strategies
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11 HOW THE THREE TYPES OF SUPPORT MAY UNFOLD OVER A SEMESTER

Please take note: The following table is an attempt to show how the different types of support unfold over a semester period. The table should be synchronised with the approved academic plan for each academic year.

		COGNITIVE (ACADEMIC) SUPPORT	NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORT	ADMINISTRATIVE (SYSTEMIC) SUPPORT
PRIOR TO ACADEMIC YEAR		<p>ACADEMIC: Well-designed learning materials and resources; integrated assessment; well-designed planning of the use of <i>myUnisa</i>, SMS, and other technologies. Student support well integrated into learning; formative and summative assessment planned. Book recording studios, videoconferencing, and satellite conferencing.</p> <p>ACADEMIC: Selection of prescribed materials, where possible E-books, OERs</p> <p>LIBRARY: ensuring substantial number of copies of recommended books in central and regional libraries. Where possible E-books, OERs.</p>	<p>CCM: Marketing OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>	<p>DESPATCH: Enough study materials, effective and efficient processes in place</p> <p>DSAA: Systems, processes, well-trained staff.</p> <p>ACADEMICS/TSDL/HR: Appointment and training of E-Tutors/E-Coaches/Markers (if applicable).</p> <p>ICT: ensure and test systems for linking tutors, coaches to Unisa systems and to groups of students.</p> <p>Satellite/VC: finalise booking time-table for the year.</p> <p>DSAA: finalisation of examination centres, invigilators, time-tables.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities,</p>

				etc.
APPLICATION PHASE		ACADEMIC: Available for advice to students and other stakeholders.	DCCAD: Available for referrals by other stakeholders. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.	DSAR: Prospective students' are assessed with regard to their compliance with the minimum admission requirements and the implications thereof (eg extended curricula, etc). DISA: Student profiling UCC: Effective information and service, correct referrals. AM I READY FOR ... - Self-assessment OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.
PRE-REGISTRATION		ACADEMIC: Available for advice to students and other stakeholders. DSAA: Advice re curriculum planning, module selection, number of modules, correct information. Effective, efficient processes, well trained staff.	DCCAD: Career advice and planning, module selection, number of modules, correct information, risk/potential assessment. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.	DSAR: Prospective students' are assessed with regard to their compliance with the minimum admission requirements and the implications thereof (eg extended curricula, etc). DISA: Student profiling, student tracking system operational and populated with historical data of re-registration students. UCC: Effective information and service, correct referrals. AM I READY FOR ... - Self-assessment OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to

				students with disabilities, etc.
REGISTRATION		<p>ACADEMIC: Available for advice to students and other stakeholders.</p> <p>DSAA: identify underprepared students. Send list through to TSDL.</p>	<p>DCCAD: Available to advice, counselling, etc.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>	<p>DSAR: Effective information and service, correct referrals.</p> <p>DESPATCH: Timeous sending of <u>complete</u> study packages.</p> <p>TSDL: allocate identified students to E-Tutors/E-Coaches. Inform E-Tutors/E-Coaches and students of allocation two days after the registration period has closed.</p> <p>ICT: Ensure sustainable access to all E-Tutors/E-Coaches, identified students.</p> <p>DISA: student tracking system active.</p> <p>AM I READY FOR ... - Self-assessment</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>
FOUR DAYS AFTER REGISTRATION HAS CLOSED			<p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>	<p>IR: provides all lecturers with a standard student profile of students registered for the module. The envisaged tracking system should be able to provide this automatically.</p> <p>TSDL: provides all academic departments with list of identified students and their allocation to E-Tutors/E-Coaches.</p> <p>DISA: student tracking system starts to run.</p>

				<p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>
<p>WEEK 1</p>		<p>ACADEMIC: First SMS welcoming students to module. Available for advice to students and other stakeholders. E-TUTORS: Establish telephonic contact with allocated students. Sends e-mail to allocated students with guidance for the first three weeks.</p>	<p>E-MENTORS: In modules which do not have an E-Tutor, an E-Mentor establishes telephonic contact with allocated students. Sends e-mail to allocated students with guidance for the first three weeks. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>	<p>TRACKING SYSTEM: identifies students who still have not received their complete study packages and follow up. UCC: hotline for despatch enquiries, and prescribed books. ICT: hotline for problems with accessing <i>myLife/myUnisa</i>. DSAR: hotline for all registration queries/module exchanges, etc OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>
<p>WEEK 2</p>		<p>E-TUTORS: Follow up student queries re academic problems with relevant stakeholders. Encourage students to share 12 week planning tool. Refer where necessary.</p>	<p>E-MENTOR: Makes contact and help students to plan for the next 12 weeks. Encourage students to share their planning outlines with him/her. Comment on these per student. Refer where necessary. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective</p>	<p>TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to e-tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students who have not submitted assignments. UCC: hotline for despatch enquiries, and prescribed books. ICT: hotline for problems with accessing <i>myLife/myUnisa</i>. DSAA: hotline for all registration queries/module exchanges, etc OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF</p>

			students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.	STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.
WEEK 3		E-TUTORS: available for individual student queries. Ensure students send in first assignments.	E-MENTOR: available for individual student queries. Ensure students send in first assignments. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.	ALL HOTLINES CLOSE. TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to e-tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students who have not submitted assignments. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.
WEEK 4		TUTORS/MARKERS: marking of first assignments. Formative personalised (where possible) feedback to students. E-TUTOR: Refer students with academic/non-academic problems/issues to appropriate departments.	E-MENTOR: Refer students with academic/non-academic problems/issues to appropriate departments. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.	TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to e-tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students who have not submitted assignments. DSAA: Ensure the correct recording of assignment marks and the posting back of marked assignments to students OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.
WEEK 5		E-TUTORS: analyse lists of how students did in the first assignment and take make personal contact. Refer where	E-MENTORS: analyse lists of how students did in the first assignment and take make personal	DSAA: Ensure the correct recording of assignment marks and the posting back of marked assignments to students.

		necessary. ACADEMIC: send out general feedback and pointers to all students, post on <i>myUnisa</i> .	contact. Refer where necessary. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.	TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to e-tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students who failed their assignments. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.
WEEK 6		E-TUTORS: available for individual student queries.	E-MENTORS: available for individual student queries. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.	TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to academic tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students who have not submitted assignments. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.
WEEK 7		E-TUTORS: help students prepare for the second assignment. Even if the assignment is not compulsory, encourage students to submit. Refer problems where necessary.	E-MENTORS: help students prepare for the second assignment. Even if the assignment is not compulsory, encourage students to submit. Refer problems where necessary. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to	TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to academic tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students who have not submitted assignments. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.

			students with disabilities, etc.	
WEEK 8		<p>ACADEMIC TUTOR/MARKER: Marks the second assignment and provides detailed feedback to students.</p> <p>E-TUTORS: follow up on whether students submitted the second assignment.</p>	<p>E-MENTORS: follow up on whether students submitted the second assignment.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>	<p>DSAA: Ensure the correct recording of assignment marks and the posting back of marked assignments to students</p> <p>TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to academic tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students who have not submitted assignments.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>
WEEK 9		<p>ACADEMIC: general examination preparation guidance, also post on myUnisa, gives pointers to E-Tutors, E-Coaches.</p> <p>E-TUTORS: exam preparation. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.</p>	<p>E-MENTORS: Keep contact with students. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>	<p>DSAA: Correct admission to the examinations.</p> <p>TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to academic tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students' activity.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>
WEEK 10		<p>E-TUTORS: exam preparation. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus</p>	<p>E-MENTORS: Keep contact with students. Emphasis on encouragement,</p>	<p>TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to academic tutor, e-coach and lecturer</p>

		on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.	help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.	regarding all students' activity. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.
WEEK 11		E-TUTORS: exam preparation. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.	E-MENTORS: Keep contact with students. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.	TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to academic tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students' activity. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.
WEEK 12		E-TUTORS: exam preparation. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.	E-MENTORS: Keep contact with students. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam	TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to academic tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students' activity. OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a

			<p>absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>	<p>range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>
WEEK 13		<p>E-TUTORS: exam preparation. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.</p>	<p>E-MENTORS: Keep contact with students. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>	<p>TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to academic tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students' activity.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>
WEEK 14		<p>E-TUTORS: exam preparation. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.</p>	<p>E-MENTORS: Keep contact with students. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE</p>	<p>TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to academic tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students' activity.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to</p>

			<p>DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>	students with disabilities, etc.
WEEK 15-15	EXAM PREPARATION SUMMER/WINTER SCHOOLS IN THE DIFFERENT REGIONS			
DURING THE EXAMINATION		<p>E-TUTORS: exam preparation. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.</p>	<p>E-MENTORS: Keep contact with students. Emphasis on encouragement, help with planning, and focus on all factors which might result in exam absence and refer to DCCAD when necessary.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>	<p>TRACKING SYSTEM: automated alerts sent out to academic tutor, e-coach and lecturer regarding all students' activity.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>
AFTER THE EXAMINATION		<p>E-TUTORS: Post examination advice and support to repeater and supplementary examination students.</p>	<p>E-MENTORS: Post examination advice and support to repeater and supplementary examination students.</p> <p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and</p>	<p>OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS: Provides a range of support services to prospective students such as financial aid and advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.</p>

			advice, support to students with disabilities, etc.	
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12 LONG-TERM VIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

- i. This proposal to be approved at the STLSC of **18 October 2010** and recommended for approval to the Senate meeting of **27 October 2010**.
- ii. Preparation for the roll-out of the pilot projects of E-Tutoring/E-Mentoring to be completed by **June 2011**.
- iii. The various reports and recommendations to serve at the STLSC of **July 2011** for phased in implementation depending on the recommendation.
- iv. Broader roll-out of ICM self-assessment and SMS projects in the **second semester of 2011**.
- v. Report on pilot E-Tutor/E-Mentor project to serve at the STLSC of **November 2011**.
- vi. Broader roll-out of E-Tutor/E-Mentor project in **first semester of 2012** with institution-wide implementation where appropriate and possible in the **second semester of 2012**.
- vii. The year **2013** to be the year where Unisa as re-imagined ODL institution is launched and celebrated.

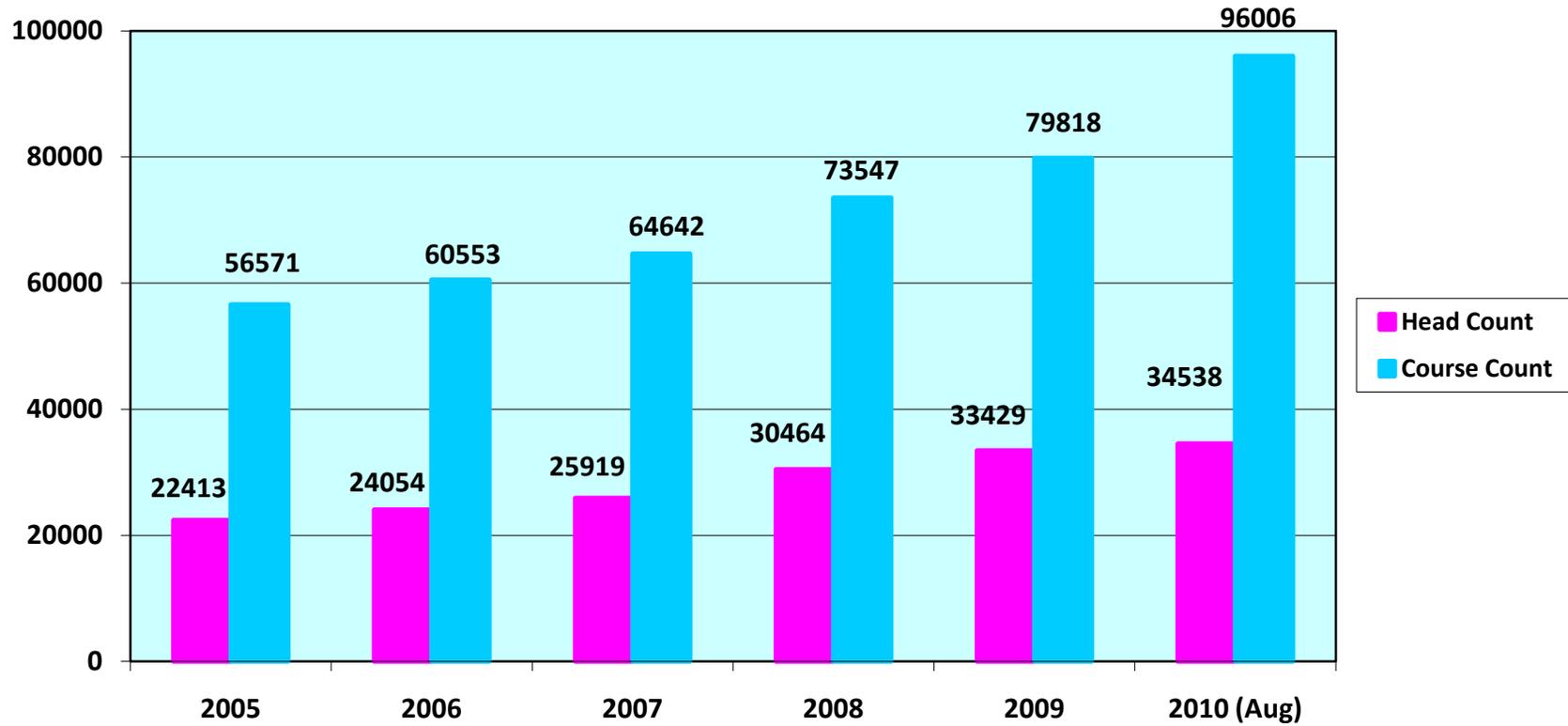
13 (IN)CONCLUSIONS

Student support at Unisa has evolved since 1995 to become an integral and integrated part of who Unisa is as an ODL institution in its striving towards becoming and being “*the African university in the service of humanity*”. This proposal with its distinct four propositions is not the final word in the evolving story of student support at Unisa but an important chapter in the next phase of Unisa’s growing into becoming a fully-fledged ODL institution where student access, learning and student success are supported and celebrated.

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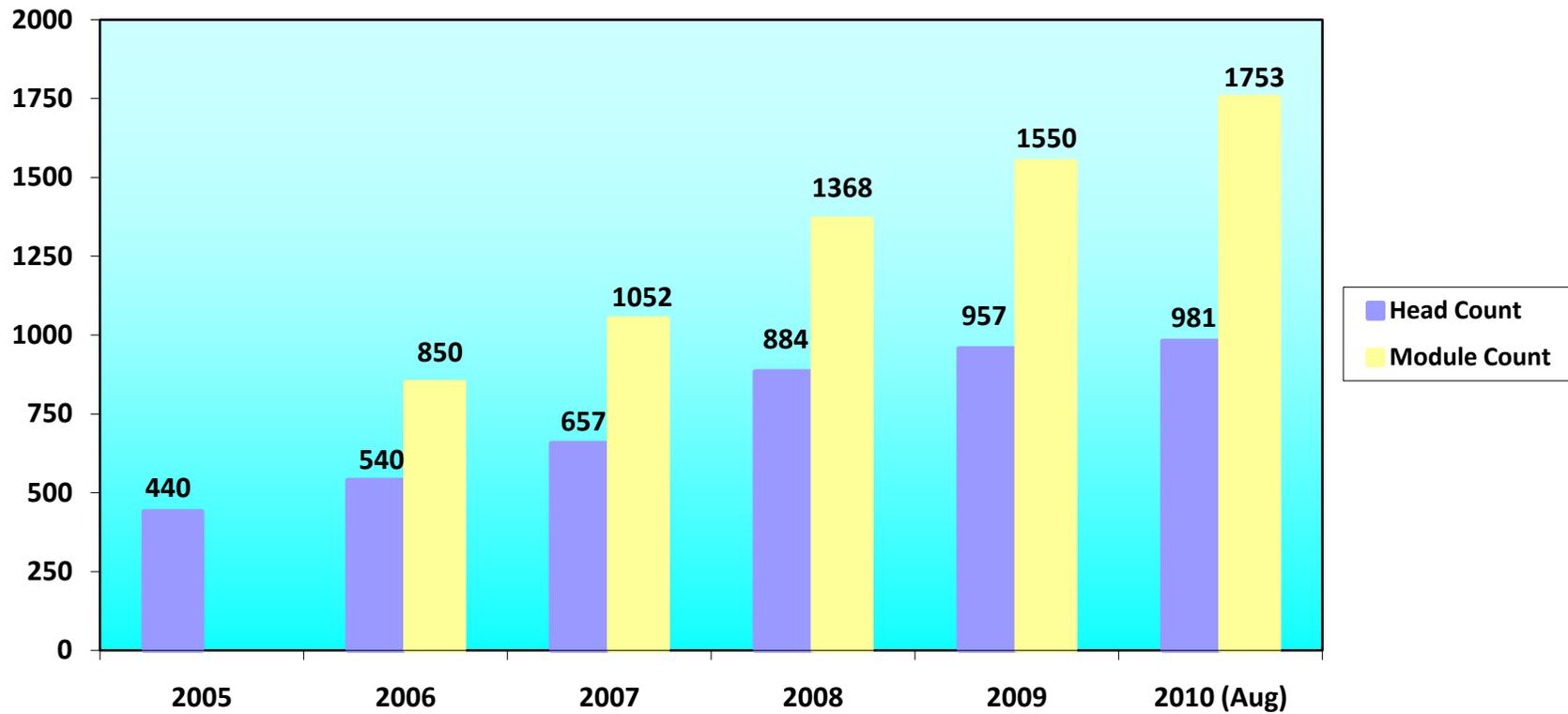
Appendix 1

TSDL Tutorial enrolment trends Head and Course Count: 2005 – 2010 (August)



TSDL Tutor appointment trends

Head and Module Count: 2005 – 2010 (August)



N.B. Module counts prior to 2006 were not recorded.